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#### Anti-trust reform is based in free market logics of upholding competition which strengthens free enterprise and saves capitalism.

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Antitrust laws have historically been associated with countries that possess a free-market capitalist economy, which is understood as an economic system in which competition and the market forces of demand and supply determine economic outcomes. This historical association between capitalism and antitrust laws is evident from the fact that the countries that first adopted national antitrust laws, such as Canada, the United States, and the countries of Western Europe, are countries that have long embraced a market economy. On the contrary, the statist economies of the erstwhile Soviet bloc and many developing countries, for the most part, did not institute antitrust laws of the type associated with free market economies. Notwithstanding these country examples, which indicate a positive association between a capitalist economic system and antitrust laws, there exist arguments that both support and oppose antitrust laws for a capitalist economy. Arguments in support of antitrust laws for a capitalist economy begin with the fundamental understanding that the most important ingredient of a capitalist system is market competition. The presence of a competitive market is vital to achieving the efficiency levels that a capitalist economy seeks. Therefore, competitive forces need to be protected to discipline the market players, especially the dominant ones. By preventing and punishing anticompetitive practices by market players, an antitrust law protects and promotes market competition. 1 In the United States, which is commonly understood to be the leading bastion of free-market capitalism and one of the first countries to enact an antitrust law, the role of antitrust legislation in preserving the capitalist character of its economic system is underscored by the near-constitutional status accorded to its antitrust statues by the U.S. Supreme Court. 2 The Court described these statutes as “the Magna Carta of free enterprise” and “as important to the preservation of economic freedom and our free enterprise system as the Bill of Rights is to the protection of our fundamental personal freedoms.”3 Such a sentiment is appropriate, given that the American antitrust law, the Sherman Act, was passed in 1890 to protect economic competition from rapidly-growing “trusts.”4 While the social and political zeitgeist has changed considerably since the passing of the Sherman Act, the fact remains that antitrust is perceived as key to “protecting consumers against anticompetitive conduct that raises prices, reduces output, and hinders innovation and economic growth.”5 Moreover, it is understood that “competition is a public good, and society cannot expect the victims of anticompetitive conduct to protect themselves.”6 The implication therefore is that government power, through the enforcement of antitrust statutes, is critical to reining in corporate power in order to protect economic competition and capitalism.

#### The new “cold war” battle for tech supremacy with China is a race manufactured to cover up US digital colonialism — only movements against capitalism can reign in US imperialism and prevent the aff’s impact.

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A Chinese or US digital empire?

In the West, there is a lot of chatter about “a new Cold War,” with the US and China battling it out for global technological supremacy. Yet, a close look at the tech ecosystem shows that US corporations are overwhelmingly dominant in the global economy.

China, after decades of high growth, generates around 17 percent of global GDP and is predicted to overtake the US by 2028, feeding into claims that American empire is on the decline (a narrative that was previously popular with the rise of Japan). When measuring the Chinese economy by purchasing power parity, it is already larger than the US. However, as economist Sean Starrs points out, this wrongly treats states as self-contained units, “interacting as billiard balls on a table.” In reality, Starrs contends, American economic dominance “hasn’t declined, it globalized.” This is particularly true when looking at Big Tech.

In the post-WWII period, corporate production was spread across transnational production networks. For instance, in the 1990s, companies like Apple began outsourcing electronics manufacturing from the US to China and Taiwan, exploiting sweatshop workers employed by companies like Foxconn. US tech transnationals often design the IP for, say, high-performance router switches (e.g. Cisco) while outsourcing manufacturing capacity to hardware manufacturers in the South.

Starrs profiled the world’s top 2,000 publicly traded companies, as ranked by Forbes Global 2000, and organized them according to 25 sectors, showing the dominance of US transnationals. As of 2013, they dominated in terms of profit shares in 18 of the top 25 sectors. In his forthcoming book American Power Globalized: Rethinking National Power in the Age of Globalization, Starrs shows that the US remains dominant. For IT Software & Services, US profit share is 76 percent versus China’s 10 percent; for Technology Hardware & Equipment, it is 63 percent for the US versus 6 percent for China, and for Electronics, it is 43 and 10 percent, respectively. Other countries, such as South Korea, Japan and Taiwan, often fare better than China in these categories as well.

Portraying the US and China as equal contenders in the battle for global tech supremacy, as is often done, is therefore highly misleading. For example, a 2019 United Nations “Digital Economy” report states that: “Geography of the digital economy is highly concentrated in two countries” — the United States and China. But the report not only ignores factors identified by authors like Starrs it also fails to account for the fact that most of China’s tech industry is dominant inside China, save a handful of major products and services, such as 5G (Huawei), CCTV cameras (Hikvision, Dahua), and social media (TikTok), which also hold large market shares abroad. China also has substantial investments in some foreign tech firms, but this hardly suggests a genuine threat to the dominance of the US, which has a much larger share of foreign investments as well.

In reality, the US is the supreme tech empire. Outside of US and Chinese borders, the US leads in the categories of search engines (Google); web browsers (Google Chrome, Apple Safari); smartphone and tablet operating systems (Google Android, Apple iOS); desktop and laptop operating systems (Microsoft Windows, macOS); office software (Microsoft Office, Google G Suite, Apple iWork); cloud infrastructure and services (Amazon, Microsoft, Google, IBM); social networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter); transportation (Uber, Lyft); business networking (Microsoft LinkedIn); streaming entertainment (Google YouTube, Netflix, Hulu), and online advertising (Google, Facebook) — among others.

The upshot is, whether you are an individual or a business, if you are using a computer, American companies benefit the most. They own the digital ecosystem.

Political domination and the means of violence

The economic power of US tech giants goes hand-in-hand with their influence in the political and social spheres. As with other industries, there is a revolving door between tech executives and the US government, and tech corporations and business alliances spend a great deal lobbying regulators for policies favorable to their specific interests — and digital capitalism in general.

Governments and law enforcement agencies, in turn, form partnerships with tech giants to do their dirty work. In 2013, Edward Snowden famously revealed that Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, YouTube, Skype, AOL, and Apple all shared information with the National Security Agency via the PRISM program. More revelations followed, and the world learned that data stored by corporations and transmitted over the internet is sucked into enormous government databases for exploitation by states. Countries in the South have been targets of NSA surveillance, from the Middle East to Africa and Latin America.

Police and the military also work with tech corporations, who are happy to cash fat checks as providers of surveillance products and services, including in countries across the South. For example, through its little-known Public Safety and Justice Division, Microsoft has built an extensive partnership ecosystem with “law enforcement” surveillance vendors, who run their tech on Microsoft cloud infrastructure. This includes a city-wide command-and-control surveillance platform called “Microsoft Aware” that was purchased by police in Brazil and Singapore and a police vehicle solution with facial recognition cameras that has been rolled out in Cape Town and Durban, South Africa.

Microsoft is also deeply involved with the prison industry. It offers a variety of prison software solutions that cover the entire correctional pipeline, from juvenile “offenders” to pretrial and probation, through jail and prison, as well as those released from prison and put on parole. In Africa, they partnered with a company called Netopia Solutions, which offers aPrison Management Software (PMS) platform that includes “escape management” and prisoner analytics.0

While it is not clear where exactly Netopia’s Prison Management Solution is deployed, Microsoft stated that “Netopia is [a Microsoft partner/vendor] in Morocco with a deep focus on transforming digitally, government services in North and Central Africa.” Morocco has a track record of brutalizing dissidents and torturing prisoners, and the US recently recognized its annexation of Western Sahara, in contravention of international law.

For centuries, imperial powers tested technologies to police and control their citizens on foreign populations first, from SirFrancis Galton’s pioneering work on fingerprinting applied in India and South Africa, to America’s combination of biometrics and innovations in managing statistics and data management that formed the first modern surveillance apparatus to pacify the Philippines. As historian Alfred McCoy has shown, the collection of surveillance technologies deployed in the Philippines offered a testing ground for a model which was eventually brought back to the United States for use against domestic dissidents. Microsoft and its partners’ high-tech surveillance projects suggest that Africans continue to serve as a laboratory for carceral experimentation.

Conclusion

Digital technology and information plays a central role in politics, economy, and social life everywhere. As part of the American empire project, US transnational corporations are reinventing colonialism in the South through their ownership and control of intellectual property, digital intelligence, and the means of computation. Most of the core infrastructure, industries, and functions performed by computers are the private property of American transnational corporations, who are overwhelmingly dominant outside US borders. The largest firms, such as Microsoft and Apple, dominate global supply chains as intellectual monopolies.

An unequal exchange and division of labor ensues, reinforcing dependency in the periphery while perpetuating mass immiseration and global poverty.

Instead of sharing knowledge, transferring technology, and providing the building blocks for shared global prosperity on equal terms, the rich countries and their corporations aim to protect their advantage and shake down the South for cheap labor and rent extraction. By monopolizing the core components of the digital ecosystem, pushing their tech in schools and skills training programs, and partnering with corporate and state elites in the South, Big Tech is capturing emerging markets. They will even profit from surveillance services provided to police departments and prisons, all to make a buck.

#### Capitalism causes unethical AI development that feeds neoliberalism.

Gurumurthy 20 (Anita Gurumurthy works for IT for Change, an NGO that works at the intersection of digital technologies and social change, and is engaged in research and policy advocacy on network society, with a focus on governance, democracy and gender justice. “How to make AI work for people and planet” , <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/how-make-ai-work-people-and-planet/> , 10 March 2020, date accessed 9/17/21)

The human body is asserting itself more than as a performative spectacle on the streets. From Hong Kong to India, Catalonia, Lebonan, Chile and many more, the body is a signifier of bio-power and hope, defeating surveillance, courting arrest and deliberately seeking the system’s panoptic gaze.

The proliferation of protests suggests a tipping point – but systematic change is harder work. And in this regard, we know enough about what the building blocks to dismantle and recreate social structures in their entirety may look like. After all, democracy was born out of the churn that political and economic structures were put through in history.

The AI (artificial intelligence) moment as we know it presents a frightening challenge – it is born of and continually feeds a global crisis of gross injustice of a deep state that is led on by a deeper corporation. Sonia Correa, the Brazilian feminist scholar, calls attention to the wider process of de-democratisation that confronts us. The collusion of the neoliberals and the neoconservatives is ravaging the rights of the majority everywhere, constantly creating the un-deserving other.

Human rights activists in the digital domain are broadly of the view that the existing human rights regime is still relevant to the challenges of the 21st century. However, a complete failure of twentieth century institutions in promoting global democracy and the rapid evolution of the AI era seem to bring in an unforeseen complexity. A normative crisis characterises the systems that work the techno-economic structures of the world. Carrying the DNA of cyber-libertarian and tech-utopian ambitions of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, these structures point to the crying need for norms-building for a new data epoch, acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the human rights framework.

The fourth industrial revolution demands that the creaking institutions of twentieth century democracy be dismantled. This is not a romantic call for revolution, but an assertion that is historically aware and grounded in the continuities of capitalism. We are compelled to look at time-space and scalar relationships afresh. We are forced to rearticulate institutional values and norms as if data is real; the data economy, the real economy. And we need to acknowledge that the virtual is institutional.

Incremental approaches will not work. In the long march of capitalism, this moment of discontinuity has produced hegemonic discourses of AI that serve neoliberal capitalism. The bi-polar geoeconomic order in which US and China are carving up the rest of the world into their economic dominion requires to be countered by an ‘ideas revolution’ for data and AI. The planet’s very sustenance is at stake.

The intelligent corporation with its virtualized production and distribution networks can no longer be contained by the rulebook for place-bound operations. Its ceaseless data accumulation needs a new institutional framework for economic rights in data.

The datafication and algorithmic management of citizenship cannot be mended by making technical choices. Citizenship rights need to be reimagined as nested, multi-scalar and essentially political.

The future of work built on the present of AI-led labour substitution and worker surveillance is but a new era of bondage. It epitomises capital’s ‘final freedom’ from labour. Worker data rights need to be the cornerstone of a new social contract, not to be left to the benevolence of capital.

A virulent patriarchy is on the upsurge globally. The fourth industrial revolution is blatantly sexist and mainstream public spheres are inherently misogynistic. Women need a different world order, and they need the power to vision and create it.

#### Capitalism causes existential climate change, nuclear war, democratic collapse, extreme inequality, and perpetual exploitation of the global south — try or die for a transition.

Foster 19, Sociology Professor @ Oregon (John Bellamy, February 1st, “Capitalism Has Failed—What Next?” *The Monthly Review*, Volume 70, Issue 9, <https://monthlyreview.org/2019/02/01/capitalism-has-failed-what-next/>, Accessed 06-30-2021)

Less than two decades into the twenty-first century, it is evident that capitalism has failed as a social system. The world is mired in economic stagnation, financialization, and the most extreme inequality in human history, accompanied by mass unemployment and underemployment, precariousness, poverty, hunger, wasted output and lives, and what at this point can only be called a planetary ecological “death spiral.”1 The digital revolution, the greatest technological advance of our time, has rapidly mutated from a promise of free communication and liberated production into new means of surveillance, control, and displacement of the working population. The institutions of liberal democracy are at the point of collapse, while fascism, the rear guard of the capitalist system, is again on the march, along with patriarchy, racism, imperialism, and war. To say that capitalism is a failed system is not, of course, to suggest that its breakdown and disintegration is imminent.2 It does, however, mean that it has passed from being a historically necessary and creative system at its inception to being a historically unnecessary and destructive one in the present century. Today, more than ever, the world is faced with the epochal choice between “the revolutionary reconstitution of society at large and the common ruin of the contending classes.”3 Indications of this failure of capitalism are everywhere. Stagnation of investment punctuated by bubbles of financial expansion, which then inevitably burst, now characterizes the so-called free market.4 Soaring inequality in income and wealth has its counterpart in the declining material circumstances of a majority of the population. Real wages for most workers in the United States have barely budged in forty years despite steadily rising productivity.5 Work intensity has increased, while work and safety protections on the job have been systematically jettisoned. Unemployment data has become more and more meaningless due to a new institutionalized underemployment in the form of contract labor in the gig economy.6 Unions have been reduced to mere shadows of their former glory as capitalism has asserted totalitarian control over workplaces. With the demise of Soviet-type societies, social democracy in Europe has perished in the new atmosphere of “liberated capitalism.”7 The capture of the surplus value produced by overexploited populations in the poorest regions of the world, via the global labor arbitrage instituted by multinational corporations, is leading to an unprecedented amassing of financial wealth at the center of the world economy and relative poverty in the periphery.8 Around $21 trillion of offshore funds are currently lodged in tax havens on islands mostly in the Caribbean, constituting “the fortified refuge of Big Finance.”9 Technologically driven monopolies resulting from the global-communications revolution, together with the rise to dominance of Wall Street-based financial capital geared to speculative asset creation, have further contributed to the riches of today’s “1 percent.” Forty-two billionaires now enjoy as much wealth as half the world’s population, while the three richest men in the United States—Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, and Warren Buffett—have more wealth than half the U.S. population.10 In every region of the world, inequality has increased sharply in recent decades.11 The gap in per capita income and wealth between the richest and poorest nations, which has been the dominant trend for centuries, is rapidly widening once again.12 More than 60 percent of the world’s employed population, some two billion people, now work in the impoverished informal sector, forming a massive global proletariat. The global reserve army of labor is some 70 percent larger than the active labor army of formally employed workers.13 Adequate health care, housing, education, and clean water and air are increasingly out of reach for large sections of the population, even in wealthy countries in North America and Europe, while transportation is becoming more difficult in the United States and many other countries due to irrationally high levels of dependency on the automobile and disinvestment in public transportation. Urban structures are more and more characterized by gentrification and segregation, with cities becoming the playthings of the well-to-do while marginalized populations are shunted aside. About half a million people, most of them children, are homeless on any given night in the United States.14 New York City is experiencing a major rat infestation, attributed to warming temperatures, mirroring trends around the world.15 In the United States and other high-income countries, life expectancy is in decline, with a remarkable resurgence of Victorian illnesses related to poverty and exploitation. In Britain, gout, scarlet fever, whooping cough, and even scurvy are now resurgent, along with tuberculosis. With inadequate enforcement of work health and safety regulations, black lung disease has returned with a vengeance in U.S. coal country.16 Overuse of antibiotics, particularly by capitalist agribusiness, is leading to an antibiotic-resistance crisis, with the dangerous growth of superbugs generating increasing numbers of deaths, which by mid–century could surpass annual cancer deaths, prompting the World Health Organization to declare a “global health emergency.”17 These dire conditions, arising from the workings of the system, are consistent with what Frederick Engels, in the Condition of the Working Class in England, called “social murder.”18 At the instigation of giant corporations, philanthrocapitalist foundations, and neoliberal governments, public education has been restructured around corporate-designed testing based on the implementation of robotic common-core standards. This is generating massive databases on the student population, much of which are now being surreptitiously marketed and sold.19 The corporatization and privatization of education is feeding the progressive subordination of children’s needs to the cash nexus of the commodity market. We are thus seeing a dramatic return of Thomas Gradgrind’s and Mr. M’Choakumchild’s crass utilitarian philosophy dramatized in Charles Dickens’s Hard Times: “Facts are alone wanted in life” and “You are never to fancy.”20 Having been reduced to intellectual dungeons, many of the poorest, most racially segregated schools in the United States are mere pipelines for prisons or the military.21 More than two million people in the United States are behind bars, a higher rate of incarceration than any other country in the world, constituting a new Jim Crow. The total population in prison is nearly equal to the number of people in Houston, Texas, the fourth largest U.S. city. African Americans and Latinos make up 56 percent of those incarcerated, while constituting only about 32 percent of the U.S. population. Nearly 50 percent of American adults, and a much higher percentage among African Americans and Native Americans, have an immediate family member who has spent or is currently spending time behind bars. Both black men and Native American men in the United States are nearly three times, Hispanic men nearly two times, more likely to die of police shootings than white men.22 Racial divides are now widening across the entire planet. Violence against women and the expropriation of their unpaid labor, as well as the higher level of exploitation of their paid labor, are integral to the way in which power is organized in capitalist society—and how it seeks to divide rather than unify the population. More than a third of women worldwide have experienced physical/sexual violence. Women’s bodies, in particular, are objectified, reified, and commodified as part of the normal workings of monopoly-capitalist marketing.23 The mass media-propaganda system, part of the larger corporate matrix, is now merging into a social media-based propaganda system that is more porous and seemingly anarchic, but more universal and more than ever favoring money and power. Utilizing modern marketing and surveillance techniques, which now dominate all digital interactions, vested interests are able to tailor their messages, largely unchecked, to individuals and their social networks, creating concerns about “fake news” on all sides.24 Numerous business entities promising technological manipulation of voters in countries across the world have now surfaced, auctioning off their services to the highest bidders.25 The elimination of net neutrality in the United States means further concentration, centralization, and control over the entire Internet by monopolistic service providers. Elections are increasingly prey to unregulated “dark money” emanating from the coffers of corporations and the billionaire class. Although presenting itself as the world’s leading democracy, the United States, as Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy stated in Monopoly Capital in 1966, “is democratic in form and plutocratic in content.”26 In the Trump administration, following a long-established tradition, 72 percent of those appointed to the cabinet have come from the higher corporate echelons, while others have been drawn from the military.27 War, engineered by the United States and other major powers at the apex of the system, has become perpetual in strategic oil regions such as the Middle East, and threatens to escalate into a global thermonuclear exchange. During the Obama administration, the United States was engaged in wars/bombings in seven different countries—Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan.28 Torture and assassinations have been reinstituted by Washington as acceptable instruments of war against those now innumerable individuals, group networks, and whole societies that are branded as terrorist. A new Cold War and nuclear arms race is in the making between the United States and Russia, while Washington is seeking to place road blocks to the continued rise of China. The Trump administration has created a new space force as a separate branch of the military in an attempt to ensure U.S. dominance in the militarization of space. Sounding the alarm on the increasing dangers of a nuclear war and of climate destabilization, the distinguished Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved its doomsday clock in 2018 to two minutes to midnight, the closest since 1953, when it marked the advent of thermonuclear weapons.29 Increasingly severe economic sanctions are being imposed by the United States on countries like Venezuela and Nicaragua, despite their democratic elections—or because of them. Trade and currency wars are being actively promoted by core states, while racist barriers against immigration continue to be erected in Europe and the United States as some 60 million refugees and internally displaced peoples flee devastated environments. Migrant populations worldwide have risen to 250 million, with those residing in high-income countries constituting more than 14 percent of the populations of those countries, up from less than 10 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, ruling circles and wealthy countries seek to wall off islands of power and privilege from the mass of humanity, who are to be left to their fate.30 More than three-quarters of a billion people, over 10 percent of the world population, are chronically malnourished.31 Food stress in the United States keeps climbing, leading to the rapid growth of cheap dollar stores selling poor quality and toxic food. Around forty million Americans, representing one out of eight households, including nearly thirteen million children, are food insecure.32 Subsistence farmers are being pushed off their lands by agribusiness, private capital, and sovereign wealth funds in a global depeasantization process that constitutes the greatest movement of people in history.33 Urban overcrowding and poverty across much of the globe is so severe that one can now reasonably refer to a “planet of slums.”34 Meanwhile, the world housing market is estimated to be worth up to $163 trillion (as compared to the value of gold mined over all recorded history, estimated at $7.5 trillion).35 The Anthropocene epoch, first ushered in by the Great Acceleration of the world economy immediately after the Second World War, has generated enormous rifts in planetary boundaries, extending from climate change to ocean acidification, to the sixth extinction, to disruption of the global nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, to the loss of freshwater, to the disappearance of forests, to widespread toxic-chemical and radioactive pollution.36 It is now estimated that 60 percent of the world’s wildlife vertebrate population (including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and fish) have been wiped out since 1970, while the worldwide abundance of invertebrates has declined by 45 percent in recent decades.37 What climatologist James Hansen calls the “species exterminations” resulting from accelerating climate change and rapidly shifting climate zones are only compounding this general process of biodiversity loss. Biologists expect that half of all species will be facing extinction by the end of the century.38 If present climate-change trends continue, the “global carbon budget” associated with a 2°C increase in average global temperature will be broken in sixteen years (while a 1.5°C increase in global average temperature—staying beneath which is the key to long-term stabilization of the climate—will be reached in a decade). Earth System scientists warn that the world is now perilously close to a Hothouse Earth, in which catastrophic climate change will be locked in and irreversible.39 The ecological, social, and economic costs to humanity of continuing to increase carbon emissions by 2.0 percent a year as in recent decades (rising in 2018 by 2.7 percent—3.4 percent in the United States), and failing to meet the minimal 3.0 percent annual reductions in emissions currently needed to avoid a catastrophic destabilization of the earth’s energy balance, are simply incalculable.40 Nevertheless, major energy corporations continue to lie about climate change, promoting and bankrolling climate denialism—while admitting the truth in their internal documents. These corporations are working to accelerate the extraction and production of fossil fuels, including the dirtiest, most greenhouse gas-generating varieties, reaping enormous profits in the process. The melting of the Arctic ice from global warming is seen by capital as a new El Dorado, opening up massive additional oil and gas reserves to be exploited without regard to the consequences for the earth’s climate. In response to scientific reports on climate change, Exxon Mobil declared that it intends to extract and sell all of the fossil-fuel reserves at its disposal.41 Energy corporations continue to intervene in climate negotiations to ensure that any agreements to limit carbon emissions are defanged. Capitalist countries across the board are putting the accumulation of wealth for a few above combatting climate destabilization, threatening the very future of humanity.

#### Racial capitalism outweighs — Capitalism necessitates super-exploitation of the Global South, colonial dispossession, militaristic imperialism, and racial hierarchies to sustain itself. The system must be rejected on ethical grounds.

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Drawing on the intellectual production of twentieth-century Black anticapitalists, I theorize modern U.S. racial capitalism as a racially hierarchical political economy constituting war and militarism, imperialist accumulation, expropriation by domination, and labor superexploitation.14 The racial here specifically refers to Blackness, defined as African descendants’ relationship to the capitalist mode of production—their structural location—and the condition, status, and material realities emanating therefrom.15 It is out of this structural location that the irresolvable contradiction of value minus worth arises. Stated differently, Blackness is a capacious category of surplus value extraction essential to an array of political-economic functions, including accumulation, disaccumulation, debt, planned obsolescence, and absorption of the burdens of economic crises.16 At the same time, Blackness is the quintessential condition of disposability, expendability, and devalorization. Footnote 14: Another feature of modern U.S. racial capitalism is property by dispossession. In Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory, Robert Nichols draws on the experience of Indigenous peoples in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand to theorize how the “system of landed property” was fundamentally predicated on violent dispossession. While the Anglo-derived legal-political regimes differed in these localities, the “intertwined and co-constitutive” material effects converged in the legalized theft of indigenous territory amounting in “approximately 6 percent of the total land on the surface of Earth.” Such dispossession, Nichols notes, is recursive: “In a standard formulation one would assume that ‘property’ is logically, chronologically, and normatively prior to ‘theft.’ However, in this (colonial) context, theft is the mechanism and means by which property is generated: hence its recursivity. Recursive dispossession is effectively a form of property-generating theft.” As such, theft and dispossession, through property regimes, are an ongoing feature of the Indigenous reality of modern U.S. racial capitalism. Robert Nichols, Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 50–51. Footnote 15: Borrowing from Karl Marx’s dictum that the labor process is the hidden abode of the capitalist production of value, and Nancy Fraser’s conceptualization of reproduction as the even more hidden abode, or background condition, for the possibility of capitalist production, I understand Blackness as the obfuscated abode. The immense value of Blackness is obscured and rendered unintelligible by its positioning as worthlessness, as something that does not amount to anything—but that does not equal nothing. As a structural location at the intersection of indispensability and disposability, Blackness exceeds the category of race, is not reducible to class, and does not fit the specifications of caste. My operationalization of capitalism follows Oliver Cromwell Cox’s explication in Capitalism and American Leadership.17 Modern U.S. racial capitalism arose in the context of the First World War, when, as Cox explains, the United States took advantage of the conflict to capture the markets of South America, Asia, and Africa for its “over-expanded capacity.”18 Cox further expounds upon this auspicious moment of ascendant modern U.S. racial capitalism thus: By 1914, the United States had brought its superb natural resources within reach of intensive exploitation. Under the stimulus of its foreign-trade outlets, the financial assistance of the older capitalist nations, and a flexible system of protective tariffs, the nation developed a magnificent work of transportation and communication so that its mines, factories, and farms became integrated into an effectively producing organism having easy access to its seaports.… [Likewise,] further internal expansion depended upon far greater emphasis on an ever widening foreign commerce.… Major entrepreneurs of the United States proceeded to step up their campaign for expansion abroad. The war accentuated this movement. It accelerated the growth of [modern] American [racial] capitalism and impressed upon its leaders as nothing had before the need for external markets.19 Relatedly, Peter James Hudson argues that the First World War fundamentally changed the terms of order of international finance, allowing New York to compete with London, Paris, and Berlin for the first time in the realm of global banking. This was not least because the Great War “drastically reordered global credit flows,” with the United States transforming from a debtor into a creditor nation.20 In addition to Latin American and Caribbean nations and businesses turning to the United States for financing and credit, domestic saving and investment patterns were altered to the benefit of imperial financial institutions like the City Bank.21 Although the United States is, to use Cox’s terminology, more a “lusty child of an already highly developed capitalism” than an exceptional capitalist power, the nation perfected its techniques of accumulation through its vast natural wealth, large domestic market, imbalance of Northern and Southern economies, and, importantly, through its lack of concern for the political and economic welfare of the overwhelming masses of its population, least of all the descendants of the enslaved.22 Modern U.S. racial capitalism is thus sustained by military expenditure, the maintenance of an extremely low standard of living in “dependent” countries, and the domestic superexploitation of Black toilers and laborers. Cox notes that Black labor has been the “chief human factor” in wealth production; as such, “the dominant economic class has always been at the motivating center of the spreads of racial antagonism. This is to be expected since the economic content of the antagonism, especially at its proliferating source in the South, has been precisely that of labor-capital relations.”23 In a general sense, racial capitalism in the United States constitutes “a peculiar variant of capitalist production” in which Blackness expresses a structural location at the bottom of the labor hierarchy characterized by depressed wages, working conditions, job opportunities, and widespread exclusion from labor unions.24 Furthermore, modern U.S. racial capitalism is rooted in the imbrication of anti-Blackness and antiradicalism. Anti-Blackness describes the reduction of Blackness to a category of abjection and subjection through narrations of absolute biological or cultural difference; ruling-class monopolization of political power; negative and derogatory mass media propaganda; the ascent of discriminatory legislation that maintains and reinscribes inequality, not least various modes of segregation; and social relations in which distrust and antipathy toward those racialized as Black is normalized and in which “interracial mass behavior involving violence assumes a continuously potential danger.”25 Anti-Blackness thus conceals the inherent contradiction of Blackness—value minus worth—obscuring and distorting its structural location by, as Ralph and Singhal remark, contorting it into only a “debilitated condition.”26 Antiradicalism can be understood as the physical and discursive repression and condemnation of anticapitalist and/or left-leaning ideas, politics, practices, and modes of organizing that are construed as subversive, seditious, and otherwise threatening to capitalist society. These include, but are not limited to, internationalism, anti-imperialism, anticolonialism, peace activism, and antisexism. Anti-Blackness and antiradicalism function as the legitimating architecture of modern U.S. racial capitalism, which includes rationalizing discourses, cultural narratives, technologies of repression, legal structures, and social practices that inform and are informed by racial capitalism’s political economy.27 Throughout the twentieth century, anti-Blackness propelled the “Black Scare,” defined as the specter of racial, social, and economic domination of superior whites by inferior Black populations. Antiradicalism, in turn, was enunciated through the “Red Scare,” understood as the threat of communist takeover, infiltration, and disruption of the American way of life.28 For example, in the 1919 Justice Department Report, Radicalism and Sedition Among the Negroes, As Reflected in Their Publications, it was asserted that the radical antigovernment stance of a certain class of Negroes was manifested in their “ill-governed reaction toward race rioting,” “threat of retaliatory measures in connection with lynching,” open demand for social equality, identification with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and “outspoken advocacy of the Bolshevik or Soviet doctrine.”29 Here, anti-Blackness, articulated through the fear of the “assertion of race consciousness,” was attached to the IWW and Bolshevism—in other words, to anticapitalism—to make it appear even more subversive and dangerous. Likewise, antiradicalism, expressed through the denigration of the IWW and Soviet Doctrine, was made to seem all the more threatening and antithetical to the social order in its linkage with Black insistence on equality and self-defense against racial terrorism. In this way, “defiance and insolently race-centered condemnation of the white race” and “the Negro seeing red” came to be understood as seditious in the context of modern U.S. racial capitalism. The link between my theory of modern U.S. racial capitalism and Robinson’s catholic theory of racial capitalism, beyond his “suggest[ion] that it was there,” is vivified through the prison abolitionist and scholar Ruth Wilson Gilmore, who writes: “Capitalism…[is] never not racial.… Racial capitalism: a mode of production developed in agriculture, improved by enclosure in the Old World, and captive land and labor in the Americas, perfected in slavery’s time-motion, field factory choreography, its imperative forged on the anvils of imperial war-making monarchs.”30 Racial capitalism, she continues, “requires all kinds of scheming, including hard work by elites and their compradors in the overlapping and interlocking space-economies of the planet’s surface. They build and dismantle and reconfigure states, moving capacity into and out of the public realm. And they think very hard about money on the move.”31 Perhaps more than Gilmore, though, my approach aligns with that of Neville Alexander as described by Hudson.32 Like Alexander, who focused on South Africa, I offer a particularistic understanding of racial capitalism, mine being rooted in the political economy of Blackness and the legitimating architectures of anti-Blackness and antiradicalism in the United States. Gilmore qua Robinson offers a more universalist and transhistorical conception. Like Alexander, my theory of modern U.S. racial capitalism is primarily rooted in (Black) Marxist-Leninists and fellow travelers. This is an important epistemological distinction: whereas Robinson finds Marxism-Leninism to be, at best, inattentive to race, my theory of modern U.S. racial capitalism is rooted in the work of Black freedom fighters who, as Marxist-Leninists, were able to offer potent and enduring analyses and critiques of the conjunctural entanglements of racialism, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness, on the one hand, and capitalist exploitation and class antagonism on the other hand.33 Although Robinson draws on scholars like Fernand Braudel, Henri Pirenne, David Brion Davis, and Eli Heckscher to understand European history, socialist theory, and the European working class, the work of Black Marxists like James Ford, Walter Rodney, Amílcar Cabral, and Paul Robeson offer me those same intellectual, historical, and theoretical resources. Finally, I agree with Alexander that the resolution to racial capitalism is antiracist socialism, not a cultural-metaphysical Black radical tradition. In what remains of this essay, I will draw on the work of Black Marxist-Leninists and anticapitalists to explicate the defining features of modern U.S. racial capitalism—war and militarism, imperialist accumulation, expropriation by domination, labor superexploitation, and property by dispossession. In this, I demonstrate that their critiques and analyses offer a blueprint for theorizing modern U.S. racial capitalism. War and militarism facilitate the endless drive for profit. Military conflicts between imperial powers result in the reapportioning of boundaries, possessions, and spheres of influence that often exacerbate racial and spatial economic subjection. War and militarism also perpetuate the endless construction of “threats,” primarily in racialized and socialist states, against which to defend progress, prosperity, freedom, and security. The manufacturing of conflict legitimates the mobilization of extraordinary violence to expropriate untold resources that produce relations of underdevelopment, dependency, extraversion, and disarticulation in the Global South. Moreover, the ruling elite and labor aristocracy in imperialist countries, not least the United States, wage perpetual war to defend their way of life and standard of living against the racialized majority who, because they would benefit most from the redistribution of the world’s wealth and resources, represent a perpetual threat.

#### The alternative is to reject the aff and critically interrogate the neoliberal discourse of the 1AC — resisting capitalist pedagogy in educational spaces is the first step towards a broader movement away from Capitalism; COVID provides a unique transition opportunity.

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As educators, it is crucial for us to examine how we talk, teach, and write about inequality as an object of critique in an age of precarity, uncertainty and the current pandemic crisis. This is especially true at a time when a growing number of authoritarian regimes around the globe substitute replace thoughtful dialogue and critical engagement with the suppression of dissent and a culture of forgetting r. How do we situate our analysis of education as part of a broader discourse and mode of analysis that interrogates the promises, ideals, and claims of a substantive democracy? How do we fight against iniquitous relations of power and wealth that empty power of its emancipatory possibilities, and as Hannah Arendt has argued, “makes most people superfluous as human beings”? How might we understand how neoliberal ideology, with its appropriation of market-based values, regressive notions of freedom and agency, uses language to infiltrate daily life? How does a pandemic pedagogy in the service of neoliberalism produce identities defined by market values, and normalize a notion of responsibility and individuality that convinces people that whatever problem they face they have no one to blame but themselves? Repeated endlessly on right-wing media platforms, the underlying conditions that disproportionately produce chronic illness among poor people of color disappear among a public distracted, if not persuaded, by a pandemic pedagogy that celebrates unchecked self-interest, disdains social responsibility, and turns away from the reality of a society with deep-seated institutional rot and unravelling of social connections and the social contract. Pandemic pedagogy thrives on inequality and becomes a militarized and heartless normalizing tool to convince the broader public that the lives of the elderly, sick, and vulnerable should be valued according to how much they contribute to the economy. And if they are willing to die in order not to be a drain on the economy, all well and good. Nothing escapes the cruel logic of neoliberalism with its arrogance and hubris on full display as it bathes in the glow of right-wing populism, ultra-nationalism, and neofascism. Its accoutrements of dictatorship are everywhere and can be seen in the swagger of militia that storm state capitals, in police who punch and pepper spray protesters and push elderly men to the ground, and in military forces on the streets without badges reinforcing a climate of fear, repression, and unaccountability. There is more at work here than a lack of humanity on the part of the Trump administration. As the Irish journalist Fintan O’Toole observes, there is also the deepening grip of a culture of cruelty and dehumanization. He writes: “As a society the American people are being habituated into accepting cruelty on a wide scale. Americans are being taught by Trump and his administration not to see other people as human beings whose lives are as important as their own. Once that line has been crossed – and it is not just Trump and the people around him, but many of Trump’s supporters as well – then we know where that all leads, what the ultimate destination is. There is no mystery about it. We know what happens when a government and its leaders dehumanize large numbers of people.” Depoliticization and the Authoritarian Turn Neoliberalism is not only an economic system, it is also an ideological apparatus that relentlessly attempts to structure consciousness, values, desires, and modes of identification in ways that align individuals with its governing structures. Central to this pedagogical project is the attempt to prevent individuals from translating private issues and troubles into broader systemic considerations. By doing this, it becomes difficult for individuals to grasp the historical, social, economic, and political forces at work in shaping a social order as a human activity deeply immersed in specific relations of power. Neoliberalism’s attempt to erase or rewrite historical and social forces makes it difficult for individuals to imagine alternative notions of society, with themselves as collective actors, or view their problems as more than the limitations of faulty character, moral failure, or a problem of personal responsibility. Reducing individuals to isolated, discrete, hermetically-sealed human beings whose lives are shaped only by notions of self-reliance and self-sufficiency is a pedagogical strategy that utterly depoliticizes people, leading them to believe that however a society is shaped, it is part of a natural order. President Trump echoed this “no alternative” narrative when asked about celebrities and rich people having special access to being tested for the coronavirus while few others had access. He replied, “Perhaps that’s been the story of life.” This individualization of the social with its mounting privatization, gated communities, and social atomization undermines collective action, any viable notion of solidarity, and weakens the notion of global connectivity. The philosopher Byung-Chul Han has rightly argued that contemporary neoliberal society is shaped by a dysfunctional notion of solitude and hermitically-sealed notions of agency, all of which undermine the values and social connections vital to a democracy. He writes: “Those subject to the neoliberal economy do not constitute a we that is capable of collective action. The mounting egoization and atomization of society is making the space for collective action shrink… The general collapse of the collective and the communal has engulfed it. Solidarity is vanishing. Privatization now reaches into the depths of the soul itself. The erosion of the communal is making all collective efforts more and more unlikely.” This panoptical nature of hyper-individualism is more aligned with shared fears than shared responsibilities. Under such circumstances, trust and the notion that all life is related become difficult to grasp as the myopic language of private self-interest inures individuals to wider social problems such as extreme inequality. There is no understanding in this discourse of the damage fanatical entrepreneurialism does to our embodied collectivity. Nor is there any value attributed to the important responsibilities, social values, and notion of the common good that exceeds who we are as individuals, or how we have been shaped by diverse social forces in particular ways. It should be clear that questions of economic and social justice cannot be addressed by a neoliberal pedagogy that enshrines self-interest and privatization while converting every social problem into individualized market solutions or regressive matters of personal responsibility. Under neoliberalism’s disimagination machine, individual responsibility is coupled with an ethos of greed, avarice, and personal gain. One consequence is the tearing up of social solidarities, public values, and an almost pathological disdain for democracy. This radical form of privatization is also a powerful force for the rise of fascist politics because it depoliticizes individuals, immerses them in the logic of social Darwinism, and makes them susceptible to the dehumanization of those considered a threat or disposable. Just as the spread of the pandemic virus in the United States was not an innocent act of nature, neither is the rise and pervasive grip of inequality. What is clear is that neoliberal support for unbridled individualism has weakened democratic pressures and eroded democracy and equality as governing principles. Moreover, as a mode of public pedagogy, it has undercut social provisions, the social contract, and support for public goods such as education, public health, essential infrastructure, public transportation, and the most basic elements of the welfare state. As a form of pedagogical practice, neoliberalism has morphed into a form of pandemic pedagogy that sacrifices social needs and human life in the name of an economic rationality that values reviving economic growth over human rights. As a lived system of meaning and values, self-reliance and rugged individualism are the only categories available for shaping how individuals view themselves, and their relationship to others and to the planet. The individualization of everyone and the reduction of social problems to private troubles is paralleled by sanctioning a world marked by borders, walls, racism, hate, and a rejection of government intervention in the interest of the common good. Most importantly, neoliberal individualization personalizes power, creating a depoliticized subject whose only obligation as a citizen is defined by consuming and living in a world free from ethical and social responsibilities. In many ways, it does not just empty politics of any substance, it destroys its emancipatory prospects. The neoliberal strategists use education not only to mask their abuses and the effects of their criminogenic policies, they also – in a time of crisis, when dissatisfaction of the masses might lead to chaos, revolts, and dangerous levels of resistance – move dangerously close to creating the conditions for a fascist politics. The noted theologian Frei Betto is right in stating that under such conditions, “…they cover up the causes of social ills and cover up their effects with ideologies that, by obscuring causes, fuel mood in the face of the effects. That’s why neoliberalism is now showing its authoritarian face – building walls that divide countries and ethnic groups, executive power over legislature and judiciary, disinformation about digital networks, the cult of the homeland, the brazen offensive against human rights.” Neoliberalism and its regressive notion of individualism and individual responsibility has undermined the belief that human beings both make the world and can change it. The pandemic has ushered in a crisis that undermines that belief and opens the door for rethinking what kind of society and notion of politics will be faithful to the creation of a socialist democracy that speaks to the core values of justice, equality and solidarity. Under such circumstances, private resistance must give way to collective resistance, and personal and political rights must include economic rights. If inequality is to be defeated, the social state must replace the corporate state and social rights must be guaranteed for all. There can be no adequate struggle for economic justice and social equality unless economic inequality on a global level is addressed along with a movement for climate justice, the elimination of systemic racism and a halt to the spiraling militarism that has resulted in endless wars. This can only take place if the anti-democratic ideology of neoliberalism, with its collapse of the public into the private and its institutional structures of domination, are fully addressed and discredited. Étienne Balibar is right in stating that the triumph of neoliberalism has resulted in the “death zones of humanity.” Following Balibar, what must be made clear is that neoliberal capitalism is itself a pandemic and a dangerous harbinger of an updated fascist politics. Overcoming Pandemic Pedagogy The kind of societies that will emerge after the pandemic is up for grabs. In some cases, the crisis will give way to authoritarian regimes such as Chile, Hungary and Turkey, all of which have used the urgency of COVID-19 as an excuse to impose more state control and surveillance, squelch dissent, eliminate civil liberties and concentrate power in the hands of an authoritarian political class. As is well documented, history in a time of crisis also has the potential to change dominant ideologies, rethink the meaning of governance, and enlarge the sphere of justice and equality through a vision that fights for a more generous and inclusive politics. It is crucial to rethink the project of politics in order to imagine forms of resistance that are collective, inclusive and global, capable of producing new democratic arrangements for social life, more radical values and a “global economy which will no longer be at the mercy of market mechanisms.” This is a politics that must move beyond siloed identities and fractured political factions in order to build transnational solidarities in the service of an alternative radically democratic society. Making the pedagogical more political means challenging those forms of pandemic pedagogy that turn politics into theater, a favorite tactic of Trump. In this case, the performance works to suspend disbelief, hold power accountable and unravel one’s sense of critical agency. Pandemic pedagogy does more than undermine critical thinking and informed judgments, it dissolves the line between the truth and lies, fantasy and reality, and in doing so, destroys the foundation for understanding, engaging and promoting that social and economic justice. The endgame under the rubric of a pandemic pedagogy is not simply the destruction of the truth, but the elimination of democracy itself. Central to developing an alternative democratic vision is development of a language that refuses to look away and be commodified. Such a language should be able to break through the continuity and consensus of common sense and appeals to the natural order of things. At stake here is the need to reclaim both critical and redemptive elements of a radical democracy in order to address the full spectrum of violence that structures institutions and everyday life in the United States. This is a language connected to the acquisition of civic literacy, and it demands a different regime of desires and identifications to enable us to move from “shock and stunned silence toward a coherent visceral speech, one as strong as the force that is charging at us.” Of course, there is more at stake here than a struggle over meaning; there is also the struggle over power, over the need to create a formative culture that will produce informed critical agents who will fight for and contribute to a broad social movement that will translate meaning into a fierce struggle for economic, political and social justice. Agency in this sense must be connected to a notion of possibility and education in the service of radical change. Reimagining the future only becomes meaningful when it is rooted in a fierce struggle against the horrors and totalitarian practices of a pandemic pedagogy that falsely claims that it exists outside of history. Václav Havel, the late Czech political dissident-turned-politician, once argued that politics follows culture, by which he meant that changing consciousness is the first step toward building mass movements of resistance. What is crucial here in the age of multiple crises is a thorough grasp of the notion that critical and engaged forms of agency are a product of emancipatory education. Moreover, at the heart of any viable notion of politics is the recognition that politics begins with attempts to change the way people think, act and feel with respect to both how they view themselves and their relations to others. There is more to agency than the neoliberal emphasis on the “empire of the self,” with its unchecked belief in the virtues of a form of self-interest that despises the bonds of sociality, solidarity and community. The U.S. is in the midst of a political and pedagogical crisis. This is a crisis defined not only by a brutalizing racism and massive inequality, but also a constitutional crisis produced by a growing authoritarianism that has been in the making for some time. The recent attacks by the police on journalists, peaceful protesters and even elderly people marching for racial justice echoes the violence of the Brownshirts in the 1930s. Let’s stop the futile debate about whether or not the U.S. is in the midst of a fascist state and shift the register to the more serious question of how to resist it and restore a semblance of real democracy. Under such circumstances, education should be viewed as central to politics, and it plays a crucial role in producing informed judgments, actions, morality and social responsibility at the forefront not only of agency, but politics itself. In this scenario, truth and politics mutually inform each other to erupt in a pedagogical awakening at the moment when the rules are broken. Taking risks becomes a necessity, self-reflection narrates its capacity for critically engaged agency and thinking the impossible is not an option, but a necessity. Without an informed and educated citizenry, democracy can lead to tyranny, even fascism. Trump represents the malignant presence of a fascism that never dies and is ready to remerge at different times in different context in sometimes not-so-recognizable forms. The COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic of inequality and racism have revealed elements of a fascist politics that are more than abstractions. The struggle against a fascist politics is now visible in the rebellions taking place across the United States. While there are no political guarantees for a victory, there is a new sense that the future can be changed in the image of a just and sustainable society. There is a new energy for reform taking place in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd. Massive protests for racial, economic and social justice are emerging all over the globe. As I have argued in The Terror of the Unforeseen, at stake here is the need for these protests to transition from a pedagogical moment and collective outburst of moral anger to a progressive international movement that is well organized and unified. Such a movement must build solidarity among different groups, imagine new forms of social life, make the impossible possible, and produce a revolutionary project in defense of equality, social justice and popular sovereignty. The racial, class, ecological and public health crisis facing the globe can only be understood as part of a comprehensive crisis of the totality. Immediate solutions such as defunding the police and improving community services are important, but they do not deal with the larger issue of eliminating a neoliberal system structured in massive racial and economic inequalities. David Harvey is right in arguing that the “immediate task is nothing more nor less than the self-conscious construction of a new political framework for approaching the question of inequality, through a deep and profound critique of our economic and social system.” This is a crisis in which different threads of oppression must be understood as part of the general crisis of capitalism. The various protests now evolving internationally at the popular level offer the promise of new global anti-fascist and anti-capitalist movements. In the current moment, democracy may be under a severe threat and appear frighteningly vulnerable, but with young people and others rising up across the globe — inspired, energized and marching in the streets — the future of a radical democracy is waiting to breathe again.

## adv – innovation

### 1NC---!D---China War

#### **No US-China war.**

Lei 20, PhD and MA in International Politics, associate research fellow with the China Institute of International Studies. (Cui, 7-24-2020, "Despite heated talk, risk of a US-China hot war is small", *South China Morning Post*, https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3094121/why-risk-us-china-hot-war-small-despite-heated-talk)

Many observers are pessimistic about deteriorating US-China relations and believe the two countries are heading towards a cold war. Even worse, some argue that the situation might be more dangerous than the US-Soviet Union Cold War, and that a hot war might break out between the two. This argument is unconvincing. First of all, deterrents to a flare-up are much stronger in US-China relations than in US-Soviet relations. Although economic and people-to-people ties between China and the US are declining, they are still close compared to US-Soviet ties. It is hard to decouple two closely intertwined economies and societies. Take two examples. China is expected to become the world's largest consumer market, a temptation hard to resist for exporters, including those from the US. And in education, more than 300,000 Chinese students study in the US, bringing in huge revenues for the US education industry. Many universities go to great lengths to woo international students. Recently Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology even sued the government over its new visa restrictions, now aborted, on international students. Second, even if there is decoupling, the pain would not be too great and can be kept out of the national security sphere if properly handled. In fact, for national security reasons, a modest degree of isolation will make both sides more secure and comfortable. For instance, if China’s information technology equipment cannot capture Western markets, the US will be more relaxed. If China cannot get advanced technologies from the US and its technological progress slows down, the US will be less anxious. In the same vein, China feels assured knowing that if the Trump administration does impose a travel ban on Communist Party members, it would be abandoning one of the tools available to the US to promote “peaceful evolution” in China. Economic decoupling is undeniably more painful for China than for the US. But unlike Japan during WWII, which was hit hard by the US oil embargo because of its lack of natural resources, China has no such problems. Given its large domestic market, losing the US as a major customer is not a disaster for China, and can be compensated through more dynamic economic activities at home. China can also make up for being freezed out of technological exchanges by turning to indigenous innovation. As for the US, it can import goods from other developing countries, albeit less cheaply. The relative loss is acceptable when weighed against the heightened perception of economic independence and security. Third, the ideological confrontation between China and the US is less intense than that during the Cold War. Unlike the obsession with ideology in those days, the line between capitalism and socialism is blurred today. The market economy has become universally recognised as the best way to promote economic growth and, politically, many countries have embraced democracy. Even North Korea calls itself the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Although ideological hawks in the US still long for the day when the beacon of freedom will light up the world, after many years of fighting bloody wars overseas, most American people are not interested in promoting democracy abroad. Meanwhile, China just wants to preserve its political system and has no interest in exporting it to other countries, as the Soviet Union did. Thus, ideological antagonism in China-US relations can easily be eased by calculations of realistic interests, which create conditions for compromise and cooperation. Fourth, both China and the US have many options other than war to achieve their policy goals. While they have no allies to serve as a buffer, given the nature of the potential conflict in the South China Sea or Taiwan Strait, both countries are adept at operating in grey zones and fighting psychological, public opinion or diplomatic warfare below the threshold of war. The forced closure of the Chinese consulate in Houston by the US government is just the latest act of brinkmanship. In addition, given China’s huge economic and financial interests in the US, the latter can wield the stick of sanctions when use of force is highly risky or not worth it. When both sides have many tools and options, why would they rush to war to achieve their goals? Last but not least, the imbalance of power will act as a deterrent. Some say the US and Soviet Union did not fight a hot war because they were evenly matched. It was not the case, actually. At the beginning of the Cold War, the Soviet Union was at a relative military disadvantage. Moreover, a country needs the will to fight before going to war, even if it is stronger militarily than its adversary. Having fought years of meaningless wars, the US is weary of war. China, too, abhors war. Having a clear understanding of US strength, especially when its own economy is slowing down and it is facing various domestic challenges, China would not wish to recklessly start a war with the US. In summary, the possibility of a hot war between China and the US is very small. The greatest danger for China is not a cold or hot confrontation with the US, but policymakers’ interpretation of the momentary hostility towards Beijing of a portion of the American population and the larger world. An erroneous interpretation could end China’s march to further opening up, and see it turn instead towards self-isolation.

### !D---Miscalc

#### No US-China miscalc---cold war, agreements, empirics, and non-naval vessels prove

Stashwick 15, spent 10 years on active duty as a U.S. naval officer, made several deployments to the Western Pacific, and completed graduate studies in international relations at the University of Chicago. (Steven, “South China Sea: Conflict Escalation and ‘Miscalculation’ Myths”, 9/25/15, https://thediplomat.com/2015/09/south-china-sea-conflict-escalation-and-miscalculation-myths/)

The threat of “miscalculation” is again in vogue. What was once a preoccupation of accidental war theorists has resurfaced in discussions about maritime disputes in Southeast Asia and Sino-U.S. relations. During the Cold War, policymakers and scholars worried about nuclear annihilation sparked by misinterpreted warnings, rogue officers, technical glitches in command and control systems, or a lower-level confrontation spiraling out of control. Absent the Cold War’s looming nuclear threat, today’s oft-repeated concerns focus on “miscalculation” causing a local or tactical-level incident between individual ships or aircraft (harassment, collision, interdiction, and so on) to lead to broader military confrontation. Some variation of this theme has been featured in public remarks by former U.S. Defense Secretaries Gates, Panetta, Hagel, and current Defense Secretary Carter, as well as Commanders of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and the U.S. Pacific Command, and was a topic of policymaker discussion going back at least to the 1996 Taiwan Strait incident. These concerns are likewise found in too many op-eds, reports, interviews, commentaries, and articles to count (see also here, here, here, and here, etc.) However, while history shows that strategic miscalculations can lead states to war, or dangerously close to it, evidence does not support the worry that miscalculation may cause a local or tactical-level incident to spiral out of control. To understand the risks associated with miscalculation, we must distinguish between miscalculation at the strategic level and miscalculation stemming from a localized incident between naval or air forces. At the strategic level – that is, a nation’s a priori willingness to escalate a conflict and use military force to achieve its objectives – no country starts a war expecting to lose. Yet, “most wars…end in the defeat of at least one nation which had expected victory,” implying all wars result from some degree of strategic miscalculation. That may be a plausible danger in Southeast Asia, but a distinct one. Instead, much of the discourse about localized maritime incidents in the South China Sea conflates strategic and local miscalculation risks, focusing on the latter’s potential to lead to a wider conflict. This concern over local miscalculation nonetheless reflects a longstanding view of the danger “incidents at sea” poses to peace stretching back to the Cold War. Both U.S. and Soviet leaderships were concerned that an incident between “peppery young ship captains” could “lead people to shoot at each other with results that might…be impossible to control,” in the words of Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations in the 1970s. Back then, the U.S. and Soviets were openly adversarial and serious incidents between their ships and aircraft were almost commonplace. Yet despite explicit mutual, strategic, and existential antagonism between the U.S. and U.S.SR, none of the hundreds of maritime incidents that occurred over the four decades of the Cold War escalated into anything beyond a short diplomatic crisis. It is possible that they avoided a nuclear spiral in these incidents through diligent diplomacy and luck. But more likely, it suggests that this type of maritime incident is insufficient on its own to lead to the worst-case scenarios envisioned. Mitigating the miscalculation concerns of officials and the extreme scenarios of some commentators is that these maritime incidents do not occur in a vacuum, de-coupled from explicit national interests. In a famous 1988 Cold War incident, Soviet vessels in the Black Sea shouldered the U.S. warships Yorktown and Caron (a controlled collision meant to push a ship off-course) while the latter were deliberately contesting what the U.S. deemed excessive Soviet legal claims over maritime rights. The Soviets knew the U.S. vessels were there to intentionally flout their claims, and the U.S. knew the Soviets would likely try to enforce them. Even if the firmness of the Soviet response was unanticipated (or deemed unlikely), there was no mystery to either side’s objectives. Thus, neither side was going to start shooting in confusion; the Soviet vessels even radioed their intention to strike the U.S. ships. While not “safe” in the strictest sense (ships do not like to “swap paint” with each other), footage from the Yorktown and Caron being pushed shows the actions to be intense but deliberate, professionally executed, and clearly of an enforcement nature, rather than a prelude to combat. While a serious diplomatic incident, both sides understood the situation, which served to moderate concern over escalation. Similarly, a shouldering incident between the U.S. cruiser Cowpens and a Chinese warship in 2013, while concerning to the U.S. from a safety-at-sea perspective, was understood to be motivated by Chinese sensitivities around testing their new aircraft carrier, not a precursor to hostilities. Nonetheless, concerns over maritime incidents, miscalculation, and spiraling conflict contain enough intuitive logic to have endured. A shared Cold War concern over miscalculations led to accords that are still in effect, such as the Agreement on the Prevention of Incidents on and Over the High Seas (INCSEA) and Prevention of Dangerous Military Activities (DMA) agreement, and may be credited with helping keep incidents between the U.S. and U.S.SR under “control.” However, the fact that agreements were reached at all is likely more significant than their content. Such agreements indicated a shared belief between U.S. and Soviet military leaderships that despite their feverish preparations for war against one another, neither wanted war to come as the result of a tactical-level incident between individual ships and aircraft. This suggests neither would let an incident, however serious, become an independent casus belli. The substance of these accords (and those reached in the South China Sea) further strengthens this thesis. While INCSEA and DMA contained rules of behavior, these were, again in Zumwalt’s words, “little more than a reaffirmation of the [maritime] Rules of the Road” (international rules that direct how ships stay safe around each other at sea). What was groundbreaking was that in concluding the accords, the U.S. and U.S.SR implicitly recognized their intentions to violate those rules and practices when advantageous (consider the Yorktown and Caron). The accords created new parallel rules by which each could do so “safely,” as well as new communications protocols to inform one another of their intentions. Together, this affirms that both sides were playing a (serious) game to establish positions and assert rights more than they were interested in war. Of course, incidents intended to reinforce maritime claims and hostile actions can look the same right up until ordnance is exchanged, but now both sides could be more confident that if shooting did start, it was an intentional act of war. Precedent for Restraint In Asia, there is recent and dramatic precedent for restraint, even after an unambiguously hostile local event, which belies theoretical arguments about the risk of miscalculation and unintended escalation. When the South Korean warship Cheonan was sunk in 2010, South Korea determined that North Korea was responsible. Far from a mere ‘incident’ of the sort worried over in the South China Sea, this was a belligerent act against South Korea’s armed forces. And yet, there was no miscalculation-fueled conflict spiral, and instead a strategically calibrated response. It remains unknown whether the sinking of the Cheonan was ordered by the North Koreans (they continue to deny any responsibility), the act of a renegade, or, perhaps least plausibly, an accident. What is clear is that despite a sunken ship and 46 sailors killed, the incident did not spiral out of control. This suggests that South Korea’s political calculus did not view militarily punishing North Korea worth the risk of a renewed – and potentially nuclear – war, which is to say that an extraordinary but tactical-level event did not trump strategic preferences. Even so, some take the miscalculation-escalation dynamic so far as to suggest that incidents between fishing vessels and coast guards in the South China Sea might lead to war. In view of the Cold War record and the recent Cheonan example, such propositions are drastically overstated. It is conceivable that a state already resolved to escalate a dispute militarily might view a local maritime incident as a convenient casus belli. But in that emphatically calculated case, no institutional impediments to such incidents would prevent the hostility. On the contrary, the prevalence of coast guards and fishing vessels is actually a sign of restraint. For a front so often considered a “flashpoint,” it is notable how few incidents in the South China Sea are between naval assets. This is not accident or luck, but instead suggests that regional players deliberately use lightly armed coast guard and other para-military “white hull” vessels to enforce their claims. Because these units do not have the ability to escalate force the way warships do, it in fact signals their desire to avoid escalation. And while “gray hull” naval vessels may be just over the horizon providing an implicit threat of force, they can also provide a further constraint on potential incidents; their very presence compels parties to consider how far to escalate without inviting more serious responses.

### 1NC---!D---China Rise

#### No hostile China rise---CCP is risk-averse

Shifrinson, 19 – Joshua, Assistant Professor of International Relations with the Pardee School of Global Affairs at Boston University; “Should the United States Fear China’s Rise?,” *The Washington Quarterly*, http://www.bu.edu/pardeeschool/files/2019/01/Winter-2019\_Shifrinson\_0.pdf

Nevertheless, considered in light of what a true relegation strategy would entail and the steps China might but has not taken, the comparatively limited nature of Chinese predation becomes clear. For one, China has not increased the rate of its military spending over the last decade even as its economy has grown; in fact, Chinese military expenditures remain below the rates witnessed in both the late Cold War period and in the early 2000s.39 Likewise, Chinese land reclamation and military deployments in the East and South China Seas have only involved territories previously claimed by the Chinese government; China has not expanded its maritime claims so much as taken a unilateral approach toward resolving existing disputes.40 It has also done little to strengthen its nuclear arsenal even though this force remains vulnerable to American disruption.41 Above all, it has made no moves to try to evict the United States from East Asia by either declaring a sphere of influence in the region42 or undercutting the U.S. alliance network.43 In fact, facing suggestions by the Trump administration that the United States might retrench, Chinese leaders have signaled they want the United States to remain active in the area.44 Ultimately, and as other analysts note, Chinese efforts contain some competitive elements, but these are also notably constrained in their scope and degree.45 This strategy makes sense. On one level, China’s rise has moved it near the top of the East Asian pecking order. A quarter century ago, China lagged behind states such as Russia and Japan economically and militarily, but now its economy outstrips all states involved in the region except for the United States.46 The military balance tells a similar story: China is far from a military hegemon, but given Japan’s limited investment in its military, Russia’s focus on Europe (and friendly relationship with China), the still-nascent emergence of India as a regional player, and the relative weakness of other countries around China’s periphery, the United States is the principal external security impediment to China’s continued rise.47 Under these conditions—absent another great power competitor—China faces incentives to try to shift the distribution of power further against the United States. By the same measure, however, China’s relative rise from a position of marked inferiority vis-à-vis the United States means it also faces strong incentives to avoid provoking the United States too much or too soon.48 Not only might overly aggressive Chinese activities court a war with the United States that the PRC might well lose, but—even short of war —it might prompt further U.S. efforts to stymie China’s continued growth. Given these conditions, Chinese leaders have good reason to embark on a slow and cautious predatory campaign—a weakening strategy—that tries to shift the distribution of power against the United States while operating below a threshold that might catalyze a hostile response. In short, limited predation—not an overt and outright push to overtake and challenge the United States—is the name of China’s current and highly rational game. As significantly, it appears Chinese leaders are aware of the structural logic of the situation. Despite ongoing debate over the extent to which China has departed from its long-standing “hide strength, bide time” strategy first formulated by Deng Xiaoping in favor a more assertive course seeking to increase Chinese influence in world affairs, Chinese leaders and China watchers have been at pains to point out that Chinese strategy still seeks to avoid provoking conflict with the United States.49 As one analyst notes, China’s decision to carve out a more prominent role for itself in world politics has been coupled with an effort to reassure and engage the United States so as to avoid unneeded competition while facilitating stability.50 Chinese leaders echo these themes, with one senior official noting in 2014 that Chinese policy focused on “properly address[ing] conflicts and differences through dialogue and cooperation instead of confrontational approaches.” 51 Xi Jinping himself has underlined these currents, arguing even before taking office that U.S.-Chinese relations should be premised on “preventing conflict and confrontation,” and more recently vowing that “China will promote coordination and cooperation with other major countries.” 52 Ultimately, as one scholar observes, there is “hardly evidence that [… China has] begun to focus on hegemonic competition.” 53 Put another way, China’s leaders appear aware of the risks of taking an overly confrontational stance toward a stillpotent United States and have scoped Chinese ambitions accordingly.

## adv – inequality

### 1nc --- Antitrust Can’t Solve Inequality

#### Capitalism makes inequality inevitable and anti-trust will only make it worse — anti-trust intrinsically serves the interest of capital by upholding competition and capitalist ideology through government structures controlled by corporate lobbying and corruption.

-Turns democracy and inequality

Curran 16, The Antitrust Bulletin, Wexford, PA, USA (William, Commitment and Betrayal: Contradictions in American Democracy, Capitalism, and Antitrust Laws, *The Antitrust Bulletin*, 2016, 61(2), 236-255, DOI:10.1177/0003603X16641235)

2. The Myth and Antitrust Laws Over the last thirty-five years, Congress and both Democratic and Republican administrations have installed policies that favor individual wealth creation and preservation.59 And the policies have worked—obviously.60 Less obvious, perhaps, is what we have just learned here—that the design of the interpretation and enforcement of Sherman and Clayton Acts promotes wealth’s maldistribution.61 Of course, then, the antitrust laws are antidemocratic.62 The Sherman Act was thought to be a check against monopolizations, against corporations growing into monopolies through monopolistic practices, while the Clayton Act was believed to check corporate acquisitions and mergers that tended to lessen competition or create a monopoly.63 Now it is wealth that matters most. It is antitrust’s goal.64 And it remains its goal even as wealth’s gross maldistribution ranks America with some of the world’s most unequal societies65—a very grim but rarely spoken about truth.66 But was antitrust ever important to America’s democracy?67 Antitrust enforcement has long been a charade—isolated and irrelevant.68 Monopolization and merger cases are filed infrequently.69 Neither the Sherman nor Clayton Acts has controlled corporate size.70 Clayton Act enforcement sanctions global mergers,71 while Sherman Act enforcement accommodates large corporations.72 Antitrust enforcement proceeds in the limited instances that market competition has been injured.73 Markets are geographic areas within which corporations engage in head-to-head competition,74 such as the street corners where a hypothetically merging BP and Exxon Mobil would compete against each other in selling petroleum, or where an alleged monopolist may have acquired a substantial market share. If a corporation lacked market power—to raise prices or reduce production—it was incapable of monopolizing or acquiring or merging with another corporation illegally. Of course, the focus on prices and quantities would always be in markets, where anticompetitive and possibly illegal conduct might occur—like the street corners where BP’s and Exxon Mobil’s service stations compete head-to-head. That these two petroleum titans operate globally, not just on corners serving motorists, would be minimized. Enforcement agency approval of past significant mergers between large petroleum producers—such as Exxon’s merger with Mobil75—illustrates the absurdity of localizing antitrust enforcement while putting pieces of Standard Oil’s 1911 busted trust together again.76 Corporations and the 20-percenters must surely give their daily gratitude to Professor (and Supreme Court nominee) Robert Bork.77 Democracy has been effectively traded for wealth—as Bork’s consumer welfare designed it.78 Why doesn’t America’s wealth extremes—approaching that of dictatorships and democratically failed nations79—arouse more democratic passion? The 2016 Democratic presidential campaign has taken aim at several antidemocratic targets.80 Large corporations are one. They have grown mightily.81 Their size, power, and trillions in wealth have made some Americans very rich. The top 20% now owns 90% of the nation’s financial wealth.82 They enjoy an exclusive corporate wealth distribution. And although Bork’s design remains antitrust’s principal concept, it is pure fantasy—competitive markets, as economists would define them, do not really exist.83 Wealth’s inequality has become a reality,84 persistent and dangerous,85 while antitrust enforcement has become that charade of isolated and irrelevant democratic importance. Yes, large corporations and the 20% are fortunate to have had Bork—as are the law professors who keep his vigil.86 Bork, according to one law professor, has had the single most lasting influence on antitrust law and policy of anyone in the past 50 years. To read the 1978 Antitrust Paradox today, one is struck by how closely contemporary case law tracks Bork’s policy prescriptions.… Bork created a unified goal for antitrust based on a “consumer welfare prescription” to shape the development of the case law.… [M]any of Bork’s ideas are mainstream now.…87 One professor visualized Bork nearly killing antitrust as the populism of the Warren Court threatened to turn into Woodstock antitrust in the 1970s, with Congress contemplating legislation to deconcentrate oligopolies and put caps on corporate growth, and with the federal enforcement agencies getting expansive “fairness” authority, pursuing shared monopoly theories, and bringing monopolization litigation against major high technology firms, [while] Bork was honing the case against antitrust.…88 Bork emerged victorious. The hugely unequal wealth of oligopolies, monopolies, and those fortunate 20-percenters who own and invest in them, won with him. A democratically shared wealth lost. Bork would have been unmoved. He disdained ethical questions.89 Who or what was to prosper was not for him to answer or antitrust laws to resolve. Antitrust, in his view, has nothing to say about the way prosperity is distributed.90 That it is for other laws, was his indulgent ethical stance.91 And if Bork had nothing for antitrust to say, the already wealthy have ended up with most of the nation’s riches. Coincidence? No. Bork wanted the nation to preserve opportunities for even more wealth.92 He wanted wealth protected from any attempts at egalitarianism,93 finding “no prospect either in antitrust or in society generally that … [egalitarianism] will be achieved.”94 So the nation should avoid the investment, is what he would likely have held. If his mind was fixed, his investment choices were false. A democratic nation need not choose between all-out wealth with its huge disparities and full-scale egalitarianism with its significant losses in efficiency. Bork was never nuanced. One always knew where he stood and what he wanted. So his failure to search the accommodating middle between polar extremes was conspicuous. He never liked democracy, its plausible outcomes, or its search to accommodate societal needs. He would not likely give an inch. Wealth remained Bork’s first and principal interest.95 Consequently, he avoided nuance to protect wealth. But against what threat must be asked. It was against any compromise by society that might inch toward equality. He should not have worried. Compromise would not result in miles frighteningly lost in efficiency.96 A few inches will only begin the backtrack of miles necessary to help compensate for the inequities of maldistributed wealth and the wealth that Bork designed antitrust to create and that he defaulted to capitalism for distribution, top to bottom. Piketty’s work97 emphasizes wealth’s inequities and more fundamental ones—the losses to equality and democracy. Bork deplored any societal egalitarianism in outcomes.98 Moving in inches hardly constitutes a threat. Bork exaggerated the worries—they were all a red herring. Will wealth and Bork’s passion for it ever be matched by a fervor for a more equitably apportioned society? For now, no. Courts understand neither how wealth’s disproportionate generation is destructive of democracy,99 nor how Bork’s consumer welfare concept promotes wealth with absolute disregard of democracy.100 It is not “objective economic analysis,”101 obviously. It promotes corporate bigness, industrial concentration, and economic power.102 And as firms inevitably increase in size, their owners and investors become wealthier while their wealth increases gross inequalities. Bork’s consumer welfare has terribly misserved millions—the vast majority of America’s citizens—adding to the burdens they carry.103 Laws that promote wealth’s inequality—whether by design or designed default—are, consequently, incompatible with democracy. Simply stated, wealth has not been built objectively; it gravitates to the wealthiest. This we know from Piketty—that wealth even if built without distributional design or purpose will flow to the top. If wealth were physical matter, it would be flowing in reverse gravitational order. How? That is how it has been designed. That is how capitalism has been designed—to get wealth to the wealthy—producing significant antidemocratic results through a top-heavy distribution. Courts continue to exploit wealth maximization.104 Then again, are not courts doing exactly what Bork criticized Learned Hand and other “anti-democratic elitists”105 for doing? Are not courts using a “legislative warrant” as Hand advocated,106 whenever they deploy the consumer welfare prescription? Did not Congress authorize that warrant for judges “to appraise and balance the value of opposed interests and to enforce their preference.”107 If Hand used First Amendment values in Associated Press, why would judges not be inclined to use other constitutional values, like democracy? And what if judges actually used them? Bork anticipated that apostasy, finding First Amendment values—if not democracy itself—to be in philosophic opposition with antitrust laws.108 So he rejected Hand’s “dissemination of news from as many sources, and with as many different facets and colors as is possible.…”109 Such a plurality of sources, facets, and colors strikes a resounding democratic chord that Bork would likely have called “preposterous,” as he would brashly label any rules to have evolved from social and political values.110 Scholars now link antitrust with distributional values.111 Professor Anthony B. Atkinson wants antitrust to value the individual,112 recognizing as Hand did in Alcoa113 that “among the purposes of Congress in 1890 was a desire to put an end to great aggregations of capital because of the helplessness of the individual before them.”114 And it is the individual—rich and poor, but especially the poor—whom Atkinson wants to protect from the inequities of the marketplace.115 Atkinson sees as Senator John Sherman did in 1890 that the “problems that may disturb [the] social order … none is more threatening than the inequality of condition of wealth, and opportunity that has grown within a single generation out of the concentration of capital into vast combinations to control production and trade to break down competition.”116 Sherman’s and Hand’s worries were certainly not Bork’s. Hand said it best in Alcoa, “[W]e have been speaking only of the economic reasons which forbid monopoly … [but] there are others, based upon the belief that great industrial consolidations are inherently undesirable, regardless of their economic results.”117 Bork—regardless of destructive results to democracy—would never find efficient economic results inherently undesirable. Bork would likely find democracy a “cornucopia of social values, all rather vague and undefined but infinitely attractive.”118 A definition that was surely meant to disparage, fails. What makes democracy attractive is its socially related values.119 What makes it infinitely attractive are its regenerative capacities and potential for self-definition.120 Bork blocked democracy’s values so as not to tempt liberal judges. He worried needlessly. An antitrust solution to wealth’s severe inequality is simply not plausible.121 Antitrust has always been the heart of capitalism’s ideology.122 In truth, antitrust’s distribution of wealth for the wealthy is more than ideology—it is heartless reality. So was Bork right? Are the fates of capitalism and antitrust intertwined?123 And if antitrust were repealed? Professor Atkinson wants antitrust saved and used for citizens.124 But like Professors Stiglitz, Krugman, and Reich, he has fallen headfirst into antitrust’s heartless ideological trap. And like the other three he would resurrect TR’s trust-busting for the twenty-first century. Piketty avoids ideological traps. He learns the facts of history—unencumbered by ideologies like Bork’s—and has an unobstructed vision125 of the unequal and democratically destructive wealth of capitalism. Bork’s antitrust is the wrong policy tool for a nation presumed to be dedicated to serving citizens equitably.126 3. A Democracy with Antidemocratic Laws Corporate wealth makes disproportionately distributed wealth. And it is with this wealth—corporate stock and other significant financial investments127—that the small 20% minority can control this nation’s democracy. Since the minority draws its wealth through capitalism’s substantial inequalities, it will likely not participate in their remediation, relinquishing its substantial political advantages. It will use its considerable wealth to keep America capitalistic, using capitalistic principles to build and maintain politically strategic wealth, supporting inequalities and corporate growth, and blocking democratic values and principles from legislative adoption.128 Certainly, a repudiation of Bork’s theory129 would begin a democratically restorative process. But after fifty years of Bork, antitrust cannot be saved from him. The Supreme Court has ground his theory into binding precedent.130 And no Court will likely overrule this body of precedent, even if a future one were to lose its procapitalistic attitude.131 Today’s blindly procapitalistic Congress is no more likely to arrest Bork’s theory.132 For America’s citizens to become more democratically equal, they must elect officials who understand the necessity of balanced and prodemocratic laws and policies.133 A reigning system of capitalism makes hope in conventional representational politics difficult, however.134 Yet if capitalism has always generated substantial inequalities, how can members of Congress fail to understand? Actually, there is evidence that some do understand.135 However, who has asked probing questions about the political, moral, and social consequences of extreme wealth inequality and capitalism’s role? Penetrating questions rarely get asked in Washington. Some years ago a prescient Robert Dahl observed, For all the emphasis on equality in the American public ideology, the United States lags well behind a number of other democratic countries in reducing income inequality. It is a striking fact that the presence of large disparities in wealth and income, and so in political resources, has never become a salient issue in American politics, or, certainly, a persistent one.136 Another keen observer has written, “escalating economic inequality … [does] not prevent the adoption of major policy initiatives further advantaging the wealthy over the middle class and poor.”137 “The massive tax cuts of the Bush era … are a dramatic case in point.”138 Questions about capitalism while rarely expressed politically are hardly new, however. Adam Smith and John Locke addressed them first, while Mary Wollstonecraft’s in her 1790 A Vindication of the Rights of Man continued their skepticism. As Professors Blau and Moncada recently observed about her, [S]he was not the first to have pointed a finger at capitalism as … [a] cause of unfair and unequal outcomes. Adam Smith recognized its insidious effects and … John Locke had argued a century earlier that decent societies were equitable ones. Adding to Smith’s and Locke’s arguments for equity was Wollstonecraft’s special insight that capitalism legitimizes the very inequalities that it produces. That has not changed. Inherent in capitalism is the self-justification for the creation of inequalities because these inequalities alone engender the competition that capitalism requires to be dynamic, while holding out the seductive promise of future success to those that fail in today’s round of competitive struggle.139 Wollstonecraft realized that capitalism must have extremes for its existence and survival. And although Adam Smith and John Locke knew this before her, ignorance about capitalism and its necessary inequalities survives some two hundred years later. Yet, today, it can be understood that if capitalism requires competition, and competition requires inequality, then antitrust laws by supporting capitalism will also contribute to the extremes in inequality to which capitalism leads. 4. Understanding and Confronting the Reality of a Subverted Democracy The questions most critical to reality based policies have already been asked here: “Is more wealth always better?” Assuredly, no. Then, “At what point will wealth obstruct a democratic society?” Most assuredly, now. When 20% owns almost 90% of the nation’s wealth,140 it is time for structural remediation. Significant wealth must stop flowing exclusively to the top 20% without the bottom 80% sharing proportionally. But can wealth be made proportional? Can wealth’s exclusivity be reformed and made democratically compatible through statutory or constitutional reform? Must the nation’s wealthiest 1% continue to accumulate riches at a rate and pace until it owns virtually all141 of the nation’s stocks, bonds, and mutual funds? Must the middle class and poor—stuck with their near zero wealth—maintain their de minimis share? The poor has made room for the middle class, splitting America into two estranged and isolated classes: the wealthy and everyone else.142 Of course, this is no democracy. How could it be? Today, however, some presidential candidates are more boldly attacking inequality, as well as the laws and constitutional decisions that threaten democracy.143 Change may be blowing in the wind, but it now blows on sheltered wealth. How shaming it is for America. Nations must institute laws that directly and immediately attack the causes and effects of inequality.144 Freed from conservative orthodoxies, nations may even install direct controls145—a point missed by our current president. He concluded a recent speech146 with a misguided warning: [R]ising inequality and declining mobility are bad for our democracy. Ordinary folks can’t write massive campaign checks or hire high-priced lobbyists and lawyers to secure policies that tilt the playing field in their favor at everyone else’s expense. And so people get the bad taste that the system is rigged, and that increases cynicism and polarization, and it decreases the political participation that is a requisite part of our system of self-government.147 But, of course, the system is rigged.148 Capitalism requires capitalists. And so Congress has rigged laws and the national economy to suit them, fitting their exacting specifications, and avoiding any meaningful controls. Does this make the president naïve? Maybe he is somewhat. And then again, maybe he was just being his ultracautious self, hoping and silently praying that his speech’s measured words escape strong exception and political opprobrium. If he were bolder and less politically cautious, he would have granted highest priorities to human need, wealth’s proportionality, and, which is to say, to democracy itself. His words, as they were, neither upset the political right nor generated remedial legislative initiatives. Few politicians must have listened.149 No one wondered why.150 Then again, the president’s take on inequality is transparently political. He pushed middle-class opportunities, not proportionally greater wealth equality for all Americans.151 America will never be more authentically democratic152 as long as its wealth-based and upper-class system predominates.153 This should concern him far more. He should have committed fully to democracy, helping the nation understand how it must commit to more proportionate wealth and laws combatting wealth’s exclusive distribution. Higher taxes and other legislation must remediate the more audacious wealth extremes, while enhanced revenues can help keep budgets balanced, infrastructure repaired, human needs funded, and public enterprises created to help counterbalance private corporate wealth. But, first, a president must be motivated. A transformational president comes along as often as a Woodstock generation. How supremely ironic it will be when the record high inequalities produced by the oligopolies and monopolies of this Borkean era are transformed by a future Woodstock generation predisposed to limit154 corporate size, growth, and profits; to increase taxes; and to create public enterprises. Law professors inclined to use Woodstock155 as a negative signifier—signifying the presumed negative extremes of the 1960s—give Bork way too much glory. If Bork had killed antitrust outright, it would have saved society from the consequences of a botched execution. But since Bork failed, antitrust has continued to facilitate wealth for the richest Americans. 5. Making Solutions Difficult—Antitrust Has Built Huge Corporations, Even Bigger Inequalities No longer Sherman Act targets, corporations have risen to power through the Act’s freedom to expand to immense size, with only relative market size controlling.156 With a small market share, a corporation like Exxon Mobil can still be one of the world’s largest—larger than many of the world’s economies—and one that in 2014 had assets of $347 billion, revenues of $408 billion, profits of $33 billion, and a market value of $422 billion.157 America’s most expensive property, the Apple Corporation,158 has been worth over $700 billion,159 and it may become the world’s first $1 trillion corporation.160 All publicly traded corporations combined tip the scales at about $19 trillion.161 If corporate wealth distorts democracy, as Professor Lindblom knows,162 then why has the public been so tolerant? Have procorporate policies won over the public with what propagandists—Hayek,163 Friedman,164 and their followers, along with the more recent “Regan Revolutionaries”—have told it? Apparently, and for now the propagandists have won. And although Bork’s theory has withstood dissent and remain preeminent, cracks in the façade do appear. Bork’s theory contends that markets compel corporations to become increasingly efficient, perhaps efficient and large enough to satisfy a market’s total demand. And even if a single corporation can satisfy total demand—and can do so without engaging in predatory or exclusionary conduct—no Sherman Act violation occurs. Demand has been satisfied through a rational and efficient response to the operation of impersonal market forces, or so Bork contends. While his theories rests on false assumptions about competition and markets, and how corporations perform within them, efficiency has won another battle in its ongoing war with equity.165 Still, should not the size and wealth of corporations always matter in a democracy? Should not a democracy control the influence, power, and political access that tens of trillions of dollars in corporate assets and cash can command? Not surprisingly, “When money can buy political influence,”166 warns a Harvard economist, “concentrated wealth threatens the very fabric of democracy.”167 The nation’s democracy requires a proportionate equality of citizen wealth. These are not new ideas. Wollstonecraft, Adam Smith, and John Locke understood the essential nature of equality.168 The Supreme Court has not. The cause would seemingly be Bork.169 He would not sacrifice efficiency to have less wealth inequality. Indeed, he would not even have society—or antitrust—move in that direction.170 Such obduracy helps explain today’s policy ambivalence over huge wealth inequalities.171 To be big, as the Court once decreed,172 is not bad. To be big does help explain the nation’s $28 trillion corporate asset base173 and the trillions of corporate cash hoarded here and overseas.174 American corporations are so big, in fact, that out of the hundred largest economies of the world, fifty-one are corporations and most are American.175 The economy’s $17 trillion GDP in 2013 was only a little smaller than the world’s next three largest economies combined.176 The nation has long accommodated corporate behemoths. The Apple Corporation has had a market value as high as $742 billion,177 along with recent annual revenues of $170 billion, cash on hand of $40 billion, and total assets of $207 billion,178 but none of this matters under antitrust law. What matters is that Apple has been extraordinarily innovative and its extremely popular products have sold like wild. So why punish it? Why would the Federal Trade Commission or the Justice Department’s Antitrust Division proceed to break up a successful firm like Apple? Its competitors and the market, under Bork’s theory, will provide sufficient discipline and control. That fickle techies have no brand loyalty will discipline Apple. Techies will bolt from Apple products in a flash for the latest glitz of a rival’s whiz-bang products. And, of course, techies already have. Apple’s stock values have significantly declined as its innovative edge has slipped and its products’ higher prices have dissipated its market shares. Its values will fluctuate as the stock market flips and flops. So goliaths like Apple and Exxon Mobil operate, as Bork’s theory sees it, under a market’s watchful control and discipline. It is, of course, a ridiculous little story of a theory, but it has hoodwinked the Court. Its Sherman Act interpretations179 promote both absolute size and immense financial power—the most prominent inevitabilities of capitalism—and citizens’ vast wealth differences. Afflicted Americans will not be heard in Congress over a chorus of some $28 trillion strong.180 Their muffled voices perpetuate the damage inflicted upon them.181 Is the damage calculable? If every $100,000 in Exxon Mobil wealth were to provide wealth for one American household,182 Exxon Mobil’s total market wealth of $422 billion183 would provide wealth for roughly 422,000 households or about 1.7 million people—equivalent to Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, and Baltimore combined. More staggering is that all corporate wealth184 equates to the wealth of 28 million households or about half the population of the United States. Such magnitude of wealth and power smothers democracy—reminiscent of “the robber baron era of U.S. capitalism over a hundred years ago.…”185 Americans are helpless, facing an onslaught of corporate dollars and the power politics of extreme wealth. From each American (rich and poor alike) must be extracted about $5,600 to cover America’s $1.8 trillion in total corporate profits,186 almost all of which is then redistributed to the 20% in the form of interest, dividends, and capital gains. As profits increase, an efficient market theory will help increase and protect the 20%’s share even as extractions from unsuspecting Americans increase. What might seem encouraging is the number of Americans who own corporate stock, houses, and other tangible assets. However, this ownership is tiny. Almost 95% is owned by the 20%,187 while the top 1% own 40%.188 What is even more disturbing is that the top 10% of wage earners take in about half of the nation’s income,189 while each of the top 1% of households earns close to $400,000190 and each of the bottom 25% earns about $22,500.191 These inequalities reflect deep structural defects. Since antitrust has aided in the creation of huge corporations, facilitated their accumulation of tens of trillions of dollars in assets and cash, and helped them distribute profits to billionaires and millionaires, it is safe to say that neither antitrust nor capitalism can remedy wealth’s extreme inequality. “[A]ntitrust policy went into eclipse during the Reagan years,” is what the spoiler Paul Krugman has written.192 And like Professor Stiglitz, Krugman criticizes the distortions that corporate wealth causes democracy, but neither he nor Stiglitz193 has gotten the remedy right. And they are not alone. Robert Reich acknowledges the damages of wealth’s inequalities, and presumes antitrust enforcement will help.194 Antitrust laws that helped create the problem cannot help solve it.195

### 1nc --- LIO Bad

#### The aff is based on a fantasy of perfecting liberal internationalism, which glosses over global class and racial inequalities. Maintaining US dominance over international law is terminally unsustainable and reproduces racial hierarchies on a global scale.

Parmar 18, Professor of International Politics @ University of London (Inderjeet, The US-led Liberal Order: Imperialism by Another Name? *International Affairs*, 151–172; DOI: 10.1093/ia/iix240)

The overall finding is that liberal internationalist thinking/theory is, in effect (albeit unconsciously on the part of its proponents), a legitimating ideology rather than an effective explanatory frame for understanding the way in which the LIO actually works. That conclusion is reached, in part, by suggesting the applicability of a rather different perspective on the operations of the LIO and US power: specifically, a synthesized Gramscian–Kautskyian framework, explained below.

The key point is that the LIO is a class-based, elitist hegemony—strongly imbued with explicit and implicit racial and colonial/imperial assumptions—in both US domestic and foreign relations. At home, this analysis helps to explain in part the phenomenon of the ‘left behind’ white working/middle class, including the affluent but economically anxious voters whose salience on the right has transformed US politics since the Reagan revolution of the 1980s.2 Responding to the (minorities’) rights revolution of the 1960s, and the loss of economic opportunity and decline in living standards due to technological change and the global redistribution of industry,3 white working- and middle-class voters drifted towards the Republicans as the party of low taxes and fiscal conservatism.4 This delivered little in material terms, however; and, as inequality increased with market freedom and real wages stagnated, workers in the ‘rust belt’ and other areas grew increasingly dissatisfied with the status quo of establishment politics, their frustration exacerbated by anxieties about ethno-racial diversity and American identity as the United States moves towards a society in which whites are a minority.5 The result was the election as president in 2016 of Donald Trump on an overtly anti-conservative and barely concealed white identity platform at home and a programme of protectionism and non-interventionism—America First—abroad.6

Yet political dissatisfaction or disaffection was not confined to the political right.7 ‘Occupy Wall Street’ and other movements and groups vented their anger at the inequalities of power, wealth and income, particularly in the wake of the Iraq War and the 2008 financial crisis.8

In external policy, the analysis helps to explain the difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of the US readily embracing a more diverse international order, as well as the character of that very embrace.9 Accepting nations of the global South on an equal footing may become a strategic necessity, but the process remains problematic given the racialized discourses of western power over the past several centuries, fortified in the United States by the experience of the slave trade, slavery, the ‘Jim Crow’ era, Orientalist views of Asians, and other factors.10 Class power helps to explain the strategic embrace of foreign elites as the sources of change and the agents of American influence, however diluted it may have been due to target states’ national interest considerations. Those at the apex of America’s hierarchies sought to forge alliances with and incorporate their foreign elite counterparts— with their full cooperation—in South Korea and China.11 Hence, the liberal internationalist ‘successes’ in the cases of South Korea and China must be qualified by considering the repercussions of developing market-oriented societies marked by economic inequality, rising social unrest and varying degrees of political repression. In ‘successful’ China and South Korea, as in India and other emerging powers, there remain major challenges underpinned by profound inequalities in power, wealth and income, associated with a politics that is frequently class-based but also heavily racialized and xenophobic.12

Why choose South Korea and China as key cases? Although these are two very different states, varying in global significance, and analysed at different periods of historical time, they do allow us to test out important claims made by liberal internationalists. South Korea is considered as a key test at the very birth of the US-led order—at a time when we might expect the new principles embodied in the UN, such as the rule of law, the lessons of the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials, the Geneva Conventions and the rights of civilians in combat zones, to be pursued with some determination if not fully achieved. Given the fervour of anti-colonialism at the time, and US claims to champion that cause, we might also expect the behaviour of the international system’s leading power to differ sharply from that of colonial rulers in what became known as the Third World. The case of South Korea tells us a great deal about the practical application of a new international system developed by US power within an international system of rules, applicable to hegemon and others alike, a key liberal internationalist claim.

China’s integration into the US-led international system from the late 1970s also tells us a great deal about the character of the international order, especially about how significant change is managed within it and what the embrace of diversity means in practical terms. By the 1970s, the US-led order was facing challenges, of course—from West Germany and Japan, for example, and the oil-producing states—not to mention demands from the G77 for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), and was also recovering from defeat in Vietnam and the legitimacy crisis following the Watergate scandal. For liberal internationalists, the integration of China is claimed as a success story both for the liberal order and for China. Yet, without denying the country’s dramatic increase in economic power, I question the character of China’s success, given the high levels of internal turmoil and the extremes of inequality that are giving rise to major political and economic instability. China, then, is a test of the claim that the liberal order rewards societies as a whole; a Gramscian–Kautskyian counter-argument would suggest that it is largely the Chinese ruling elite and its business allies, not the mass of ordinary Chinese, who have been accommodated in the US-led international system.

Liberal internationalism: theory, ideology, practice

Liberal internationalism is an ambiguous, multifaceted approach to understanding, explaining, justifying and practising international politics. One aspect of it is as a positive theory taught in academic International Relations (IR), derived from liberalism as applied to international affairs, explaining how the foreign policies of leading states, especially the United States and Britain, work. It is also a normative world-view, used by some of its proponents to indicate what the world ought to look like and how it might, and frequently does, work. Liberal internationalism, therefore, is also a set of policies, institutions and established practices.13

As an IR theory, the key pillars of liberalism, as embodied in liberal societies, are limited government, individual freedom, private property, pluralism and tolerance, progress, institutions and cooperation for peace, and interdependence. As a theory of US foreign policy, which is the object of analysis here, it encompasses democratic values, economic interdependence, international institutions as a framework for cooperation in addressing global crises and problems, and the broad promotion of general welfare. Emerging historically from the era of rising anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, with the United States and Britain in the lead, the US-led order laid claims to being opposed to colonial rule, and in favour of national and human rights, within a system of international power undergirded by rules binding hegemon and others alike. It was promoted not as a continuation of empire by other means, but as a new system based on universalistic principles applicable to all regardless of race, colour or history.

For my immediate purposes, it is unnecessary to disentangle the positive from the normative, the theoretical from the practical, because this framework of thought emerges both from deep principles and also as a set of solutions to international problems, especially world wars. Hence, liberal internationalism is frequently referred to as Wilsonianism, after the internationalist programme promulgated by US President Woodrow Wilson after the First World War that included the formation of the League of Nations, the forerunner of the longer-lasting post-1945 United Nations system.

I argue here that, as a theory, it operates as ideological legitimation even when its proponents offer reform; it justifies the status quo. In that regard it differs little overall from other theories like Marxism, for example, or realism. But because it is the principal system of ideas and practices, and ideals, that are used to explain, implement and defend the present international status quo, I would suggest that it elides too much to be fully validated beyond the circle of its proponents. Of course, it explains aspects of the world’s functioning; but its interpretation tends to be benign: crises and challenges are explained as resolvable within the system’s governing principles through socialization, integration and assimilation.

I use the term liberal internationalism, then, as an amalgam to suggest that, while it is all of the above, upon reflection it serves within academia and in IR as a positive theory of how things actually are—that is, as the opposite of an ideology. It purports to be able to explain the world, at the same time as its adherents are normative supporters of the theory. I show that it is actually ideological, because it elides key factors of how the liberal world order actually works, and that other theories suggest better ways of explaining the world.

In the next section of the article, I analyse liberal internationalist ideas and claims in more depth and more critically, with a view to identifying key elements of a more viable framework to explain the LIO—a critical theory influenced by the work of Antonio Gramsci and to some extent synthesized with the work of Karl Kautsky. The principal aim of this article is to identify the weaknesses of liberal internationalism in practice with the purpose of opening space for subsequent theorizing. In sum, what appears to be missing from liberal internationalism is any recognition of domestic power inequalities—such as those based on class and race—its broad attachment to (democratic) elitism, and its hierarchical approach to other powers, especially in the global South.

While Wilsonian liberal internationalism is widely recognized as privileging a belief in the free movement of people, capital, goods and services, less attention has been given to its origins in a time when ‘international relations’ was overtly understood as ‘race relations’, and its consequent implication in managing overtly racialized imperial power after the First World War.14 The Wilson administration’s role in racially segregating the US federal government had its foreign policy counterpart in a belief in an eventual, but far distant, self-government of the colonies and opposition to a Japanese proposal for a racial equality clause in the charter of the fledgling League of Nations.15 The development of liberal internationalism, then, was symbiotically bound to Wilson’s conviction that US intervention in world affairs was essential, and to what were effectively parastatal organizations created both by the federal executive and by private foundations—the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, among others. Wilsonian ‘theory’ was practical, idealistic and ideological from the very beginning. It is also the case that, long after overt racial discourses became politically damaging, subliminal racial thinking remained—and (unconsciously) remains—a significant element of liberal internationalism, affecting its analyses of the politics of domestic and global demographic power shifts.16

Nevertheless, liberal internationalists are cosmopolitans—opposed to narrow nationalism and trade protectionism, within a US-led international system. But its core ideas—rule of law, superiority of the western idea (however lightly worn), a rules-based institutional order open to all, in principle—are deeply embedded in US political-intellectual elite think-tanks, university public policy schools, corporate media and the leaderships of both main political parties,17 the core of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant establishment.18 Importantly, however, there are influential voices in the emerging powers and regions that support the liberal international order by calling for internal reform to take account of the changing distribution of global power away from the West and towards the ‘rest’.19

The upshot is a broad consensus around certain core ideas: that the post-1945 rules-based world order, whatever its weaknesses, serves the world well by spreading prosperity and maintaining peace; and that, although it cannot continue unreformed, the US-led system draws on deep resources—economic, military, systemic and ‘soft’—that bestow upon it continuing strengths to contain, engage, manage and socialize emerging powers. Charles Kupchan lists a range of problems requiring US leadership, even if only within a suitably reformed international system reflecting ‘the real distribution of power’.20

John Ikenberry of Princeton University, the leading proponent of this school of thought, makes significant claims as well as several unquestioned assumptions, undeveloped allusions to core powers’ violent and other connections with the periphery, and a number of significant silences. He claims, for example, that the United States is a fully functioning democracy, yet fails to acknowledge evidence of the power of racialized, class-based elites. For critical theorists, such as Robert Cox, Stephen Gill and Craig Murphy,21 the international relations of elites across states and societies operate to reproduce extant patterns of power and manage or engineer change to the benefit of elites in a generally zero-sum game in which broad masses and lower classes lose out. This is clearly a far cry from liberal internationalist claims associated with the benefits of globalization, notwithstanding proposed ameliorative remedies against the harshest effects. Likewise, claims about the centrality of the rule of law occlude consideration of significant violations in practice. The question of imperial power is hardly addressed, and there is a general Eurocentric neglect of the significance of global areas beyond the core to the ‘welfare’ and cohesion of the core itself. There is a clear link between Ikenberry’s overt theory of American democracy and its liberal-hegemonic world role. The United States, and the western order it built, is characterized as a pluralistic liberal market democracy that is broadly inclusive and tolerant of ethnic diversity. The US-built security community exhibits its leading state’s internal character as a plural one and, very significantly, one in which the United States is bound by rules.22 Yet liberal internationalists’ underlying assumptions effectively deny the findings of numerous well-researched studies challenging American democracy’s principal claims.23

As far as Ikenberry and Deudney (and many others) are concerned, the ‘western idea’ is a significant part of the strength of the US-led order.24 The West, a spectacularly successful ‘civilizational heritage’, was underpinned by America’s New Deal liberalism, and extended globally via Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan and NATO. In effect, this vision and programme aimed to defuse domestic class conflict and the threat of war through ‘activist government, political democracy, and international alliance’. That system is in principle capable of assimilating emerging powers, given the universalism of its values and its tolerance of ethnic differences, although others joining this privileged grouping are expected to conform to its rules and accept US leadership. Western order is exclusive also because special rules apply within its zone of peace. Beyond it, conversely, other rules apply—cruder, neo-imperial and violent, although the implications of this contrast are left unaddressed.25 By drawing a line around the West, Ikenberry cuts off the rest of the world while addressing questions about the sources of world order which, empirically, lie in a symbiotic relationship between core and periphery. Yet, even within the ‘greater’ West, Japan and South Korea were not accorded the same treatment as western Europe.26 The LIO really was conceived and developed as a system of the West and the rest, in a zero-sum game. As Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, noted on Twitter in May 2017, the whole point of ‘Euro-Atlanticism’ was to ‘prevent post-West world order’.27

Yet the claim persists that this is no empire, despite America’s privileged place at the top of the ‘hierarchical political order’, because its hegemony is built on ‘consent’ and bounded by law. Power, which was necessary at the creation, faded away as consensual hegemony developed. This interpretation, of course, elides America’s overwhelming military superiority, including in and over Europe. Beyond Europe, however, Ikenberry concedes that American hegemony remained hierarchical, ‘with much fainter liberal characteristics’,28 again closing off an avenue of analytical and empirical analysis that might threaten the intellectual edifice of the LIO.

The (unconsciously) racialized world-view of Ikenberry’s Eurocentrism is subtly buttressed by Walter Russell Mead’s exploration of the significance of superior Anglo-Saxons who win wars, build world structures, and govern efficiently owing to ethno-cultural, not biological, characteristics.29 Mead’s interpretation of Anglo-Saxonism makes it appear benign, assimilative and universal— a scaffolding to support Ikenberry’s more overtly institutional analysis.

Assimilating minorities, however, is not embracing diversity—learning from other cultures and creating something new; it is maintaining conformity to the cultures of the powerful, dominant group.30 Looking to the future, as new global powers emerge, Mead advises America to both embrace and contain them, retaining military superiority should ‘rising’ powers become ‘opponents’.31 Mead complements the prescriptions of other liberal-realist internationalists, all seeking to incorporate, assimilate and mobilize emerging powers to absorb difference and produce conformity.

The liberal view is challenged by scholars who argue that the New Deal order effectively represented a political compromise, made in order to attain class peace and greater productivity, that mainly benefited major corporations while incorporating organized labour and thereby drawing its teeth. The postwar settlement was a narrow one—excluding racial minorities, unskilled and unorganized labour, and women—and relied on war and a heavily militarized economy that arose with the war in Korea and led directly to that in Vietnam.32 Liberal internationalists’ accounts elide the class, gendered and racial bases of the order, both at home and abroad. Ikenberry paints an appealing picture of a liberal order that delivered material benefits and security to all, while also raising some doubts about the operation of the system, especially with regard to the inequality of rewards generated by globalization and its potential political consequences. Those consequences are regarded by Ikenberry as posing the greatest threats to the stability of the liberal order, laying bare a central mechanism and dynamic of the system itself: market-driven class inequality, exacerbated in a society in which racialized class politics is salient.33 Yet Ikenberry never mentions class, race or gender—an omission central to critical theories of the making of the LIO.34

The other key omission is the role played in building the order by violence and outright war—not just the Second World War but also the Korean War, the ‘hot’ war at the birth of the order that propelled the formation of NATO, the rearmament of Germany, the security alliance with Japan and indeed the US military–industrial complex.35 Accordingly, a key focus of consideration here is wartime planning for a new world order and the manner of its foundation as a direct result of military violence that violated the UN Charter, international law, the lessons of the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials, and the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Wars ‘out there’ secured the core ‘over here’.36

And, of course, what is referred to as benign ‘liberal internationalism’ is what Mark Mazower refers to as ‘imperial internationalism’—trying to maintain a global hierarchy established by centuries of colonial and semi-colonial rule over what is now called the global South.37

Finally, the construction of the postwar western order was constitutive of a political, social, economic and ideological ‘vital center’, as Schlesinger terms it38—opposed to both right-wing nationalists and left-wing anti-imperialists. This entailed the acceptance by core forces of the ‘New Deal order’ that the price of class harmony, stability and mobility at home was the export and continuation of inequality,39 and therefore military violence, on the periphery; and that the removal of vast quantities of raw materials required a global military basing strategy, both to protect allied trade and to deny it to adversaries.40 Ikenberry accurately notes that the internal character of the leading state in the liberal order has an impact on the international system it built; but I diverge from his presentation of this impact as the externalization of a democratic regime. He elides the racial, class and gendered character of American historical, economic and political development—including that of Wilsonianism itself.41 His conclusion, however, is accurate, even if he fails to recognize its significance in the building and maintenance of the liberal order: ‘Access to resources and markets, socioeconomic stability, political pluralism, and American security interests—all were inextricably linked.’42

The framework that may best fit the actual underlying engine of liberal orderbuilding and maintenance, however, must also incorporate understanding of the ‘soft’ processes of socialization or incorporation. Violence is a powerful tool, but always and everywhere it is connected with the processes of non-violent elite socialization and alliance-building. It is one of the great strengths of Ikenberry’s analysis of international order that elite socialization is considered so significant.43 Yet a critical view of elite socialization in the building and perpetuation of hegemony views it not as a reflection of a democratic and benign foreign policy, but as incorporation into hegemonic agendas or ‘domestication’.44 In the Gramscian perspective, capitalist Great Powers, including the United States, are deeply unequal at home and imperialistic abroad, ultimately pursuing the interests of their ruling classes and elites, whether embedded in private, public or state– private realms.45 Their hegemony is a combination of persuasion and coercion involving a ‘state–society complex’.46 Admittedly, liberalism gives an account of elite socialization processes that overlaps with Gramscian approaches. However, liberal approaches see it as relatively benign, politically neutral or representative of democracy/popular sovereignty.

# 2nc

### 2nc – fw

#### Critique is a pre-requisite to policy alternatives.

Hilgers 13 — Mathieu Hilgers, Laboratory for Contemporary Anthropology, Université Libre de Bruxelles, and Centre for Urban and Community Research, Goldsmiths, University of London, 2013 (“Embodying neoliberalism: thoughts and responses to critics,” *Social Anthropology*, Vol. 21, No. 1, February 2013, p. 75-89, Accessed Online through Emory Libraries)

The implementation of neoliberalism goes far beyond the mere appearance of its policies. It cannot be reduced to the application of a programme or to institutional changes. This implementation is deployed within a triangle constituted by policies, institutions and dispositions. This last component has remained at the margins of our debate. If we wish to grasp the depth of the changes that neoliberalism causes, we cannot neglect its effects on systems of dispositions. To analyse this impact, it is necessary to describe the symbolic operations that give rise to government-enabling representations as well as to categories that support neoliberalism and are propagated by it. This task requires accounting for the historicity of the spaces in which policies are put into action, the intentional constructions but also involuntary historical formations in which they become entangled, and the transactions, negotiations, associations, working misunderstandings and chains of translation that give them their flexibility and support their deployment.

Neoliberalism is embodied in the agents and representations through which it is put into action. Through a historical process, the dispositions that it generates become, as Bourdieu would say, durable and transposable, as well as increasingly autonomous from their initial conditions of production. As such, when these conditions disappear or transform, or when policies are modified or abandoned, some of them spread into other social spaces and contexts and take on new meanings. Therein lies the importance of broadening the notion of ‘implementation’, so that we may appreciate the role of culture in the dynamics of neoliberal expansion. It is precisely (but not only) because of the embodiment of neoliberalism emphasized in this paper that at the moment we are nowhere near the end of the neoliberal era. Thus I arrive, by a different path, at the same observation that Kalb (2012) formulated in this debate: today it is capitalism that is in crisis, not neoliberalism.

In some parts of the world, information that helps people to stabilize their perceptions, practices and activities is mainly produced within a neoliberal context, forms and procedures. The figures, statistics, norms, audits and discourses that I evoke in this paper are fashioned by a constellation of institutions; they condition, train and shape a mental and practical space. They impact the way in which one conceives and carries out research. Indeed, academia is not outside of this neoliberal world; on the contrary, it is a centre of development and support for neoliberalism. While many academics are critical of neoliberalism, this does not mean that they have a permanent deconstructionist relation to the world and to themselves. In many parts of academia, a neoliberal way of functioning has become common sense. If neoliberalism is so present in our mind and in the way in which academia is designed and works today, it appears more than necessary for researchers to consider how this shapes their relation to production of knowledge.

### 2nc – ! – turns ai

#### Growth causes rushed AI development — extinction.

De Haan 19, AI Expert, Futurist and Space Enthusiast (Hein, October, “Capitalism: The Enemy of Friendly AI,” *Towards Data Science*, <https://towardsdatascience.com/capitalism-the-enemy-of-friendly-ai-e6b3f40dbe08>, Accessed 08-27-2021)

We need to talk about our future; specifically, our future as influenced by advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI). At some point in our near future, many experts expect humanity will create the first Artificial General Intelligence (AGI): an AI that’s roughly as intelligent as humans are. Relatively shortly after, an Artificial Superintelligence (ASI: an AI much smarter than any human) will most probably arise. Note that humans rule the planet because of their superior intelligence; an ASI might very well take over due to its intelligence being superior to our intelligence. An ASI does not by default share our moral values, and many thinkers, like the late physicist Stephen Hawking, have warned that creating an ASI could lead to the extinction of humankind.

What is Friendly AI?

Let’s start by defining Friendly AI. A term coined by AI researcher Eliezer Yudkowsky, it refers to an ASI that is beneficial to humanity instead of harmful. Like we discussed in the introduction, an ASI does not by default share our morals; a Friendly AI is one that does. The importance of Friendly AI can hardly be overstated, and can be illustrated with a thought experiment called the paperclip maximizer, first described by Nick Bostrom. This thought experiment describes an AGI that is given the seemingly innocent goal of maximizing the number of paperclips in its collection.

The ASI is so successful that it eventually transforms all of Earth into paperclip manufacturing facilities.

In order to more successfully optimize the number of paperclips, the AGI improves its own intelligence in order to become an ASI. This ASI then invents (radical) new ways of manufacturing more and more paperclips; it is so successful that it eventually transforms all of Earth into paperclip manufacturing facilities. Of course, humanity goes extinct as a side effect. It’s not that the ASI hated us; it’s just that we were made out of material it could use for its own purpose.

Note that human extinction can be a side effect of a lot of goals an ASI has, not just maximizing the number of paperclips. Human extinction could even be instrumental to an ASI’s goal. Say you give an ASI the goal of minimizing the amount of spam you get in your inbox. In order to achieve this, the ASI could simply wipe out humanity, as that would guarantee that you’ll never get spam again.

What does capitalism have to do with this?

I hope the paperclip maximizer thought experiment has made it clear that “friendliness” is not a default property of ASI. That’s exactly the problem: building an ASI is a (huge) challenge, but making it friendly (a Friendly AI) requires some challenge on top of that. The point is that capitalism rewards those that are faster to market: companies rush to put their product on the market before a competitor delivers theirs, because they understand that being the first matters.

The monetary reward of being the first company to create ASI will be incredible.

The same will be true for ASI: companies are already investing billions of dollars into AI, but in the future, the total investment will only grow, especially when the possibility of creating ASI becomes more feasible. The monetary reward of being the first company to create ASI will be incredible. An ASI could do so much valuable work so much better and so much faster than any human could that the first mover advantage will be indescribable. Now remember what we discussed: Friendly AI requires an extra challenge on top of ASI. Companies might very well not think too much about friendliness in order to be the first to create ASI, and that’s where the disaster starts.

### 2nc – ! – turns solvency

#### Capitalism makes monopolization inevitable.

Klitgaard 13 (Kent, Professor of Economics and Sustainability at Wells College, “Heterodox Political Economy and the Degrowth Perspective,” Sustainability 2013, 5, 276-297; doi:10.3390/su5010276, DOA: 8-30-2021) //Snowball

Marx also makes an important distinction between wealth and value that many contemporary economists do not consider. Wealth consisted of use values, and the source of much wealth was found in nature. Without the use values of inputs, such as resources and energy, no production could occur. But, value or price was derived from human labor capable of producing surplus value. The products of nature only transferred their value when capitalized. Most economists and social theorists (e.g., David Ricardo) treated nature’s contribution as “a free gift.” Value or price depended upon the amount of human labor embodied in the commodity [9]. The debate about how seriously Marx took issues of nature remains controversial to this day and forms one of the differences between the CNS approach and the Monthly Review School. For Marx, the primary contradiction was between social production (many interdependent workers, merchants and capitalists were responsible for production) and private appropriation. Surplus value was capitalized as private profit and reinvested in the expansion of the business. Growth or more properly, capital accumulation, was built into the dynamic of capitalism from the level of the individual enterprise. However, this reinvestment process was not smooth. Capitalists needed to expand the scope of their factories and markets. This entailed increasing the organic composition of capital (or the capital labor ratio) in order to increase labor productivity, as well as to create new products and processes. Recall that only living labor creates new value in the theoretical framework of classical political economy. When the rate of surplus value (a measure of labor productivity) rises faster than does the capital-labor ratio, profits will rise. However, eventually under conditions of price competition, the value of the capital-labor ratio rises faster than does the rate of surplus value. Profits then fall and an economic crisis commences. In the crisis, the conditions that created it, the rise of the organic composition and the fall in the rate of surplus value, are rectified. Excess capacity and bad debts are written off, and unemployed workers are willing to work harder for less. The organic composition falls and the rate of surplus value rises, issuing in a new era of capital accumulation and growth. In the process, however, capitals become concentrated or larger in scale and more centralized or owned by fewer capitalists. In short, the inevitable outcome of capitalist competition is a tendency towards monopoly.

In 1966, Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy published their “Essay on the American Economic and Social Order,” entitled Monopoly Capital [11]. They argued that the level of monopoly concentration that Marx had merely predicted had become the dominant business structure by the 20th century. Rather than competing on the basis of price, monopolists competed by expanding market share and reducing costs. Baran and Sweezy use the term monopoly broadly and to mean concentrated industry, rather than as the narrow “single seller” of neoclassical economic theory. Sweezy, after all, was responsible for the “kinked” oligopoly demand curve, a concept rarely transmitted to today’s students. Since, in their analysis, the mechanism that drove the tendency for the rate of profit to fall was price competition among capitalists, the very nature of value changed with the emergence of monopoly capital. Rather than a “decennial cycle” of prosperity and depression, the normal state of monopoly capital was longterm stagnation or slow economic growth. The source of the stagnation was a rising economic surplus that could not be fully absorbed by the spending outlets available: investment, consumption and waste. Baran and Sweezy chronicled why investment was insufficient, further developing an idea made famous by Evesy Domar. Investment creates additional capacity even as it serves as a spending outlet (or absorbs the economic surplus). Spending is short lived, while the investment is long lived, and the problem becomes both perpetual and unsolvable by further incremental investment. Moreover, the system is burdened by excess capacity, which is a chronic condition of monopolistic industrial organization [12], and one cannot rely on vibrant investment in a time when much capital remains unutilized. Consequently, the growth trajectory of a capitalist economy is unstable. Mainstream economic growth theory results from a critique of the work of Domar, along with that of Roy Harrod. In 1956, Robert Solow published “A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth.” In this article, he contended that Harrod and Domar postulated fixed technical conditions of production (although this assumption appears explicitly in neither the original books nor papers of Harrod or Domar.) Solow, claiming that resource substitutability is a “crucial” assumption, substituted a Cobb-Douglas production function for Harrod and Domar’s supposed fixed-production isoquants. Presto! The instability of the system disappears, and a fundamental social problem of economic instability is transformed into an easily-solvable technical problem. Yet, despite Solow’s prominence and the virtual disappearance of the original work of Harrod and Domar from the teaching of economic growth theory, the vast social problems of stagnation and unemployment persist even in today’s economy [13]. Even with the advent of a sales effort to expand conspicuous consumption, the level of spending by capitalists and workers is inadequate to the task of surplus absorption, and government spending was discouraged when it competed effectively with the private sector. This leaves waste, in the form of planned obsolescence and military spending, not to mention fuel inefficiency, as a primary mechanism of surplus absorption. This is a crucial point. If waste is built into the very structures of systemic maintenance in the era of monopoly capital, then sustainability cannot be achieved by increases in efficiency alone. Furthermore, conspicuous consumption is not simply bad behavior on the part of privileged consumers. Rather, it is a fundamental part of the system. In order to achieve sustainability, one must change the institutions that perpetuate waste as a condition of macroeconomic stability and growth.

### 2NC---!---AT Innovation

#### Capitalism stifles innovation.

Bee 18, lawyer and editor at Current Affairs magazine. (Vanessa, 10-24-2018, "Innovation Under Socialism", *Current Affairs*, <https://www.currentaffairs.org/2018/10/innovation-under-socialism>)

But prioritizing profit is a double-edged sword that can hamper innovation. Owning the proprietary rights allows private firms to block workers—through anti-competitive tools like non-compete agreements, patents, and licenses—who put labor into the innovation process from applying the extensive technical expertise and intimate understanding of the product to improve the innovation substantially. This becomes especially relevant once the workers leave the firm division in which they worked, or leave the firm altogether. Understandably, this lack of control and ownership will cause some workers, however passionate they may be about a project, to be less willing to maximize their contribution to the innovation.

Of course, the so-called nimbleness that allows firms to make drastic changes like mass layoffs is extremely harmful to the workers. This is no fluke. The capitalist economy thrives on a reserve army of labor. Inching closer to full employment makes workers scarcer, which empowers the labor force as a whole to bargain for higher wages and better work conditions. These threaten the firm’s bottom line. So, the capitalist economy is structured to maintain the balance of power towards the owners of capital. Positions that pay well (and less than well) come with the precariousness of at-will employment and disappearing union power. A constant pool of unemployed labor is maintained through layoffs and other tactics like higher interest rates, which the government will compel to help slow growth and thereby hiring. This system harms the potential for innovation, too.

The fear of losing work can dissuade workers from taking risks, experimenting, or speaking up as they identify items that could improve a taken approach—all actions that foster innovation. Meanwhile, thousands of individuals who could be contributing to the innovative process are instead involuntarily un-employed. This model also encourages monopolization, as concentrating market power gives private firms the most control over how much profit they can extract. But squashing competition that could contribute fresh ideas hurts every phase of the innovation process, while giving workers in fewer workplaces space to innovate.

Deferring to profit causes many areas of R&D to go unexplored. Private firms have less reason to invest in innovations likely to be made universally available for free if managers or investors do not see much upside for the firm’s bottom line. In theory, the slack in private research can be picked up by the public sector. In reality, however, decades of austerity measures threaten the public’s ability to underwrite risky and inefficient research. Both the Democratic and Republican parties increasingly adhere to a neoliberal ideology that vilifies “big government,” promotes running government like a business, pretends that government budgets should mirror household budgets or the private firm’s balance sheet, and rams privatization under the guises of so-called public-private partnerships and private subcontractors.

In the United States, public investment in R&D has been trending downward. As documented in a 2014 report from the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, “[f]rom 2010 to 2013, federal R&D spending fell from $158.8 to $133.2 billion … Between 2003 and 2008, state funding for university research, as a share of GDP, dropped on average by 2 percent. States such as Arizona and Utah saw decreases of 49 percent and 24 percent respectively.” Even if public investment in the least profitable aspect of research suddenly surged, in our current model, the private sector continues to be the primary driver of development, production, and distribution. Where there remains little potential for profit, private firms will be reluctant to advance to the next phases of the innovation process. Public-private projects raise similar concerns. Coordinated efforts can increase private investment by spreading some costs and risk to the public. But to attract private partners in the first place, the public sector has a greater incentive to prioritize R&D projects with more financial upsides.

This is how the quest for profits and tight grip over proprietary rights, both important features of the capitalist model, discourage risk. Innovations are bound for plateauing after a few years, as firms increasingly favor minor aesthetic tweaks and updates over bold ideas while preventing other avenues of innovation from blossoming. At the same time, massive amounts of capital continue to float into the hands of a few. The price of innovating under capitalism is then both decreased innovation and decreased equality. The idea that this approach to innovation must be our best and only option is a delusion.

As I see it, four ingredients are key to kindling innovation. First, there must be problems requiring solutions (an easy one to meet). Second, there must be capital and resources available to invent, develop, produce, and distribute the innovative product. There must also be actual human beings available to participate in every phase of the innovation process. And fourth, at least some of these human beings must have the creativity and motivation to participate in the innovation process. The question isn’t really whether a socialist economy can provide these four ingredients at all (it can) but rather, whether it can innovate better than a capitalist economy (it can).

### 2nc – at: world getting better

#### Capitalism has made the world far worse — any improvements in living standards are due to progressive policies.

Hickel 19, An academic at the University of London and a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (Jason, November 22nd, “It’s not thanks to capitalism that we’re living longer, but progressive politics,” *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/nov/22/progressive-politics-capitalism-unions-healthcare-education>, Accessed 07-12-2021)

It wasn’t until the 1880s that urban life expectancies finally began to rise – at least in Europe. But what drove these sudden gains? Szreter finds it was down to a simple intervention: sanitation.

Public health activists had discovered that health outcomes could be improved by separating sewage from drinking water. And yet progress toward this goal was opposed, not enabled, by the capitalist class – libertarian landlords and factory owners refused to allow officials to build sanitation systems on their properties, and refused to pay the taxes required to get the work done.

Their resistance was broken only once commoners won the right to vote and workers organised into unions. Over the following decades these movements leveraged the state to intervene against landlords and factory owners, delivering not only sanitation systems but also universal healthcare, education and public housing. According to Szreter, access to these public goods spurred soaring life expectancy throughout the 20th century.

Pinker makes no mention of this movement. His argument relies instead on a scatter plot known as the Preston curve, which shows that countries with higher GDP per capita tend to have higher life expectancies. But he asserts causation where there’s no evidence for it. In fact, new research finds that the causal factor behind the Preston curve isn’t GDP at all, but education.

Of course, social services require resources. And it’s important to recognise that growth can help toward that end. But the interventions that matter when it comes to life expectancy do not require high levels of GDP per capita. The European Union has a higher life expectancy than the United States, with 40% less income. Costa Rica and Cuba beat the US with only a fraction of the income, and both achieved their greatest gains in life expectancy during periods when GDP wasn’t growing at all. How? By rolling out universal healthcare and education.

“The historical record is clear that economic growth itself has no direct, necessary positive implications for population health,” Szreter writes. “The most that can be said is that it creates the longer-term potential for population health improvements.”

Whether or not that potential is realised depends on the political forces that determine how income is distributed. So let’s give credit where credit is due: progress in life expectancy has been driven by progressive political movements that have harnessed economic resources to deliver robust public goods. History shows that in the absence of these progressive forces, growth has quite often worked against social progress, not for it.